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THE HOLY APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST ST. JOHN THE DIVINE



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**MESSAGE**  
**from His Holiness Patriarch DIMITRIOS I**  
**of Constantinople**  
**to His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy**  
**of Moscow and All Russia**

Your Beatitude and Holiness, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, beloved Brother in Christ, our God, and concelebrant of Our Humbleness, Kir Aleksy.

We greet you in the Lord with a brotherly kiss.

We have received and considered with due attention letter No. 3461 from Your Beloved Beatitude of November 22 of the past year concerning the situation which has developed in Your Sister Holy Russian Church in connection with the recent changes in the Soviet Union, the situation which has brought about positive and negative consequences in her life and salvific activity.

Both we and Their Eminences, our brothers experience great joy over the positive facts in the life of Your Church and congratulate Your Beatitude upon them and sing the praises to God Who has thus provided for you. As for the negative phenomena that cause confusion within the bosom of Your Church, our Mother, the Great Holy Church of Christ, which always sides with her beloved Daughter and Sister—the Russian Church, resolutely condemns them. I mean in particular the impermissible and in many respects anti-Christian activity of the Uniates to the detriment of the Orthodox believers in the Western Ukraine, seizure by them of holy churches, vandalism, sacrilege, etc., the Autocephalists' movement in the Ukraine, the activity of the Russian Orthodox so-called Church Outside Russia and of other Christian groups against Orthodox interests. The Ecumenical Patriarchate recognizes only one canonical Orthodox Church established in 1593 by the Patriarch and the Synod within the precincts of Your Holy Church, that is, the Holy Russian Church, which is recognized by all Local canonical Holy Churches of God and is remembered in sacred diptychs.

And once again from the Holy Apostolic and Patriarchal Ecumenical Throne we declare and assure Your Beatitude and Your Church that we are always on Your side both in joy and in the settlement of problems, rejoicing and suffering together with You, and that we will do all we can to ease the situation in Your Church which is being overwhelmed with troubles.

Reporting in reply about the above-stated to Your Beloved Beatitude, we ardently pray our Lord and God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, for the earliest cessation of the temptations scourging Your Holy Church and for help in everything to Your Beatitude and Your hierarchs in accomplishing this feat and witness, assuring once again that we are *partakers of the sufferings, ...of the consolation* (2 Cor. 1.7).

Embracing You with a brotherly kiss, respectfully and affectionately Yours in the Lord.

Your Beatitude's affectionate Brother in Christ,

*Patriarch DIMITRIOS of Constantinople*

January 10, 1991



# Telegrams from His Holiness Patriarch ALEKSY II

To His Beatitude DIODOROS I,  
Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem and All Palestine

*Jerusalem*

Your Beatitude,

It is with profound grief and anxiety that we follow the reports on the hostilities in the Persian Gulf area, which have spread to the precincts of the Holy Jerusalem Church headed by You, creating a direct threat to the Holy City of Jerusalem. In these tragic days we beseech the All-Merciful Lord to soften the hearts of the hardened people, to pour the balm of mercy and cure on those who have suffered and to grant peace to the souls of the fallen. We are praying for the prevention of a further spread of the military conflict, for the complete cessation of hostilities, which create a real danger of a universal catastrophe, and for a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

We express our sincere sympathy to Your Beloved Beatitude and Your God-loving flock and ardently wish you spiritual courage, undiminishing patience and omnipotent assistance of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

With fraternal love in the Lord,

*ALEKSY, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, members of the Holy Synod*

January 31, 1991

To Archimandrite NIKITA,  
Head of the Russian Orthodox Mission in Jerusalem

*Jerusalem*

Honorable Father,

We are profoundly anxious about the spread to the Holy City and the Holy Land of the consequences of the military conflict in the Persian Gulf, creating a direct threat to the peaceful population and the shrines. We rejoice at the courage which You and Your colleagues and sisters of the Gorneye Convent display in this dramatic situation. We ardently pray to the Lord, beseeching Him to fortify the forces of the children of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Holy Land, so that you could carry on your extremely difficult mission just as staunchly and successfully. We ask for prayers at the great shrines and are not slackening the ardour of our prayers, beseeching the All-Merciful Lord to expedite the cessation of the bloodshed in the Persian Gulf zone and a peaceful solution of the problem.

I invoke God's blessing upon all of you,

With love in Christ,

*ALEKSY, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia*

January 31, 1991

## Telegram in Reply from the Patriarch of Jerusalem

To His Holiness Patriarch ALEKSY II

*Moscow*

We have been profoundly moved by the consolatory telegram of Your Beloved Holiness expressing solidarity with our Holy Church.

We are convinced that through the mercy of our Lord and with Your fraternal support and prayers we will overcome the difficulties of this tough time, too. We ask You to pray for universal peace in future as well.

Yours affectionately,

*DIODOROS, Patriarch of Jerusalem*

February 9, 1991



## Translation of the Relics of St. Serafim to Moscow

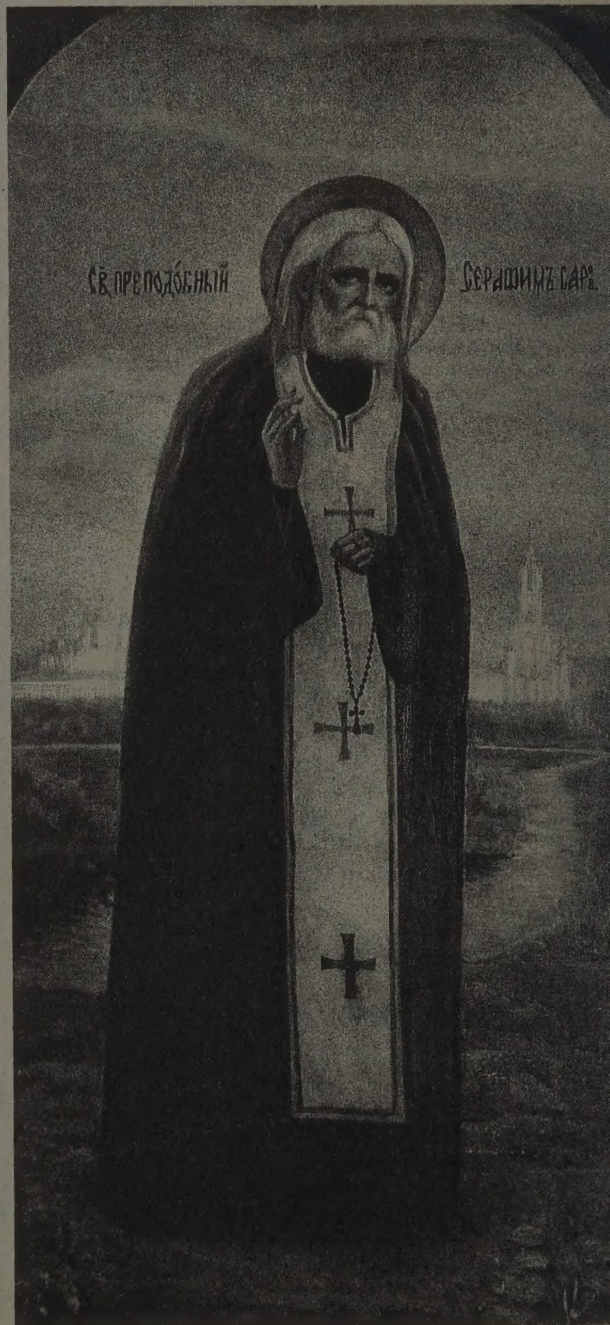
Many events, not always pleasant, have marked the year of 1991. But for the Orthodox it will always be the year of the miraculous second invention of the holy healing relics of St. Serafim of Sarov. St. Serafim, the teacher of the Russian monkhood, the healer and predictor of the future, is one of the most revered Russian saints. The years of his life—he departed in 1833—are included in the sphere of our cultural and spiritual being. His contemporaries were Aleksandr Pushkin, Nikolai Gogol, Mikhail Lermontov, and Vasily Zhukovsky. His teachings are simple and close to our consciousness. The places where he lived and prayed, forests where he wandered with his usual knapsack, are surviving till our days. On the other hand, the purity of his monastic life, the greatness of his feats are akin to those of the hermits of the first centuries of Christianity: he lived through all the trials they had lived through, and acquired the gifts equally miraculous.

It is not impossible that the witnesses of the solemnities of the glorification of St. Serafim in 1903 be still alive. According to the description it was a magnificent celebration. Thousands of pilgrims from all parts of Russia including the tsar family came to Sarov to venerate the newly canonized Saint and to be present at the consecration of the church in his name. Many new healings were added then to the list of miracles worked at the tomb of the Saint and on discovering the Saint's relics all the present smelt an unusual fragrance.

For two decades the stream of believers to his tomb did not cease, and they got consolation and relief of their sufferings like during the Saint's life. But the long night had already fallen upon Russia, persecutions of believers began.

Reliquaries of saints were being barbarously opened up, desecrated and often destroyed. They were being taken away from the demolished churches, their traces lost in unknown repositories of museums. The cup did not pass from St. Serafim's relics. In 1922 the tomb was opened up, the relics taken away from Sarov. But according to the words of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II "the Orthodox church consciousness could not become reconciled to the thought that they were lost irretrievably. The Orthodox believers lived in hope that sooner or later the relics would be invented again".

After being removed from the tomb at the Sarov cloister in 1922 the relics were brought to Moscow, to the Religious Arts Museum at the Monastery of the Don Icon of the Mother of God. When the museum was closed down its stock was handed over to the Central Antireligious Museum (CAM) which also existed for a short period of time. Then the trace of the relics was lost. There was a hope that the holy relics would be found in the Leningrad Museum of the History of Religion and Atheism (now Museum of the History of Religion) which had taken over the basic stock of the CAM and where the relics of St. Aleksandr Nevsky and the Solovki ascetics were kept. However, neither the attempts to find any mention of the relics in the documents



*An icon of St. Serafim of Sarov*

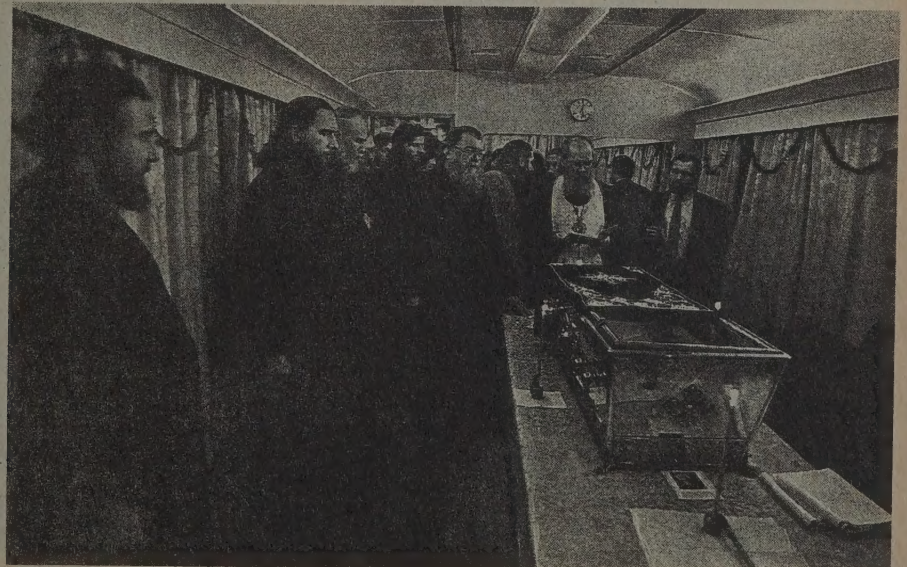


*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy celebrating the Divine Liturgy in the Church of the Smolensk Icon of the Mother of God in Leningrad, February 6, 1991*



*The procession with St. Serafim's relics leading from the St. Aleksandr Nevsky Lavra to the Moskovsky Railway Station*

*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy in the presence of the hierarchy reading the Akathistos to St. Serafim of Sarov before his relics in the carriage of the train "Red Arrow"*





of the museum, nor special research undertaken in connection with the beginning of the restoration work in the Diveyevo Convent, were a success. It can be regarded as a miracle that when there was practically no more hope left the relics of the Saint were invented at last in the very repository of the Museum of the History of Religion where they had been looked for.

This is what S. Pavlov, head of the department of the history of Orthodoxy of the museum told us: "The museum is being prepared now to be moved, articles to be returned to the Church are being selected. One of the staff members paid attention to a rectangular object in the corner of the room where gobelins were kept. Nobody had paid attention to it before because in this room articles with lost details were kept. The object had the size of an average man. It was sewn up in linen. Since this time the exhibits were checked thoroughly the staff member guessed to rip the linen open. Under it we saw a wooden pedestal on which we found the relics covered with gauze and cotton wool (the gauze was nailed to the pedestal, probably for the transportation). We removed the cotton wool and saw a full skeleton of a man: the beard, the hair, and even particles of muscular tissue have been preserved. There was a skufya on the skull with a round opening for kissing the relics. A brass cross lay on the chest—the very cross Father Afanasy's mother had blessed him with—all his life it had

been with him. The cross was in a silver frame of later work probably made for the day of the canonization by the well-known Olovyannishnikov's jewelry shop. His arms in priest's cuffs and light-coloured satin mittens were folded crosswise on his chest.

"On one mitten there was a golden embroidery 'O Holy Serafim', on the other—'Pray unto God for us'. I was thunderstruck, I realized that it was an event of extraordinary importance. We placed the relics in a separate room and once, locked it, and informed the director. The director sent a message to Patriarch Aleksy. In December a special commission sent by His Holiness the Patriarch arrived at the museum. It consisted of Bishops Evgeny of Tambov and Michurinsk and Arseny of Istra, who had copies of acts of the invention of the relics in 1903 and the opening up of the reliquary in 1922 with them. In our presence they examined the relics. Everything coincided with what was written in the acts with the exception of the epitachelion and a part of a leg bone..."

This is the testimony of the witness of the significant event which has taken place in our time—the second since the 1903 invention of the relics of St. Serafim of Sarov. His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia, hierarchs and clergy (see *JMP*, 1991, No. 4) took part in the ceremony of handing over the relics of St. Serafim of Sarov to our Church which took place in the Leningrad

*The Moscow clergy and the faithful meeting St. Serafim's relics at the Leningradsky Railway Station in the morning February 7*







*The relics of St. Serafim being brought into the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Epiphany*

Museum of the History of Religion (Cathedral of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God) on January 11, 1991. The press, radio and TV gave a wide coverage of the event.

The mass media gave detailed reports on the stay of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy in Leningrad on February 5-6 this year connected with the translation of the relics of St. Serafim to Moscow. The heavenly patrons of Leningrad were with the northern capital during this festal event. It coincided with the Commemoration Day of St. Ksenia of St. Petersburg; a solemn moleben was conducted by His Holiness the Patriarch in St. John's Convent on the Karpovka River at the tomb of the Righteous St. Ioann of Kronshtadt. For almost a month the relics of St. Serafim stayed in the Holy Trinity Cathedral near the relics of the Orthodox Prince St. Aleksandr Nevsky. In his speech His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy said: "The city has acquired one more heavenly patron—St. Serafim of Sarov, whose relics were invented here."

On February 6, the Feast of the Blessed Ksenia of St. Petersburg, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy assisted by hierarchs and the clergy celebrated Divine Liturgy in the Church at the Smolensk Cemetery. After the service His Holiness surrounded by bishops, the clergy and numerous believers carrying lit up candles, went to the Chapel of St. Ksenia. A moleben was conducted at the tomb of the Saint. As a student of the Theological Academy the future

Patriarch used to come to pray here. By efforts of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy a lampada has been lit up here in honour of the Saint. The memory of St. Ksenia is a matter of special concern of the Patriarch. And today his heart cannot help beating with joy at the sight of a continuous flow of believers to the chapel, to the tomb of St. Ksenia, and to the Church of the Smolensk Icon of the Mother of God.

On the same day, at 9 p. m. His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy assisted by hierarchs and the clergy conducted a moleben at the Holy Trinity Cathedral of the St. Aleksandr Nevsky Lavra before the relics of St. Serafim of Sarov. Several thousands of believers were present at the moleben. Flashes of the reporters' cameras sparkled constantly. The holy procession to the Moscovsky railway station started.

At the head of the procession crosses and banners were carried, then clerics went in festal vestments, behind them the Icon of the Saint was carried. Behind it were bishops carrying the steel reliquary of St. Serafim. Behind the reliquary surrounded by hypodeacons His Holiness the Patriarch walked leaning on his staff, and then—a continuous flow of believers with candles. When the procession reached the Nevsky Prospect—the traffic there was stopped—the prayerful singing "O Holy Saint Serafim, pray unto God for us" broke out. The sea of lights was lighting up the prospect from the Lavra to the Moskovsky railway station. And again the singing was heard "...Save us with thy prayers,





*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy delivering an oration before the moleben to St. Serafim in the Epiphany Cathedral, February 7, 1991*

Serafim, our holy father...". At the railway station the words of prayers to St. Serafim were said again. The reliquary was set on a table in a special carriage, a candlestick with a lit candle fixed on each corner of the table. When the train started His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy began a moleben before the relics.

The thought of their miraculous invention brings back to memory the words of Archbishop Innokenty Belyaev of Tambov and Shatsk († 1913): "In the person of St. Serafim we have found a new preacher of the truthfulness of our holy faith, a new supporter of our hopes, a new model for imitation, a new helper in all our needs, but at the same time our judge and denouncer if rejoicing at his appearance we do not awake from our sinful sleep, do not take the road of truth which he took to reach the heaven, and do not stream with his help to our Heavenly Kingdom."

All-night prayers were being said by the reliquary, while the train carrying the precious shrine through the winter night was approaching Moscow. The train passed the Khimki station and it was announced on the radio: "The train 'Red Arrow' carrying the relics of St. Serafim is arriving in Moscow."

At the railway station in Moscow the great shrine of the Land of Russia escorted by His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy, Archbishops Nikolai of Nizhny Novgorod and Arzamas (now Metropolitan), Valentin of Korsun, and Evgeny of Tambov and Michurinsk; Bishops Arseny of Istra and Viktor of Podolsk, was met by Metropolitans Filaret of Minsk and Grodno, Patriarchal Exarch to All Byelorussia, Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna, Vladimir of Rostov and Novo-

cherkassk, Pitirim of Volokolamsk and Yuriev, Gedeon of Stavropol and Baku; Archbishops Serafim of Penza and Kuznetsk, Kliment of Kaluga and Borovsk; Bishops Yevsey of Samara and Syzran, Panteleimon of Arkhangelsk and Murmansk, Grigory of Mozhaik, Paisy of Orel and Bryansk, Tikhon of Novosibirsk and Barnaul, Kornily of Tallinn, Bishop Vasily (Orthodox Church in America), the clergy of Moscow parishes, representatives of the cloisters, and thousands of Muscovites and guests of the capital.

At 8.25 a. m. a holy procession started from the square of the three railway stations to the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Epiphany. The procession along the streets of Moscow was headed by His Holiness the Patriarch. The reliquary was carried by hierarchs in turn. The clergy and believers sang the troparion and magnification to St. Serafim. On the way of the procession the traffic was stopped. From the near-by houses Muscovites watched the holy procession, and the believers bowed to the relics of St. Serafim with veneration. Festal ringing of the bells could be heard from the belfry of the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Epiphany.

At the doors of the Cathedral the reliquary was met by thousands of believers. The reliquary was brought inside the Cathedral and put before the ambo. His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy assisted by bishops and the clergy conducted a festal moleben. Then the believers one by one approached the reliquary with the relics of St. Serafim and everyone received from His Holiness the Patriarch a coloured postcard depicting the great holy man of God of the Land of Russia. The relics of the Saint will abide in the Epiphany Cathedral till July this year.

*B. KOLYMAGIN*

*During the moleben to St. Serafim in the Epiphany Cathedral*





# Archimandrite NIKON Vasyukov Nominated and Consecrated Bishop of Ufa and Sterlitamak

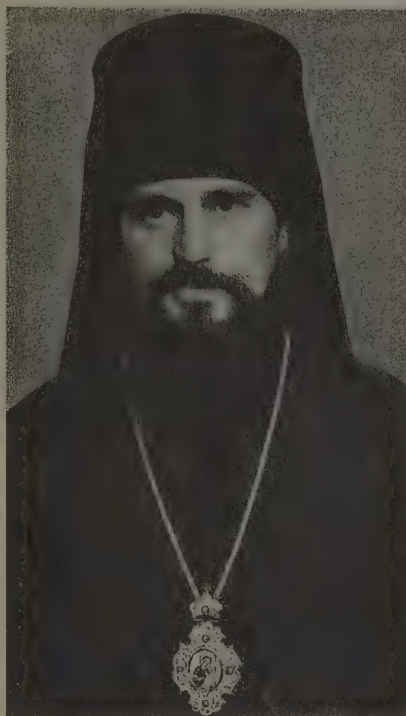
On August 25, 1990, in the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Epiphany, Moscow, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy of Moscow and All Russia, Metropolitan Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna, Archbishops Varnava of Cheboksary and Chuvashia, and Longin of Düsseldorf, Bishops Prokl of Ulyanovsk and Melekes and Arseny of Istra, Vicar of the Moscow Diocese, conducted the office of nomination of Archimandrite Nikon Vasyukov as Bishop of Ufa and Sterlitamak.

During his nomination Archimandrite Nikon delivered an oration, in which he said in part:

"In this unique and sacred hour in my life I am standing in front of you in fear and trepidation, realizing my infirmity and unworthiness and waiting for the descent, through you, of Divine Flame of the All-Sanctifying and Life-Giving Spirit of God, inducting a bishop to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood (Acts 20. 28).

"God's will manifested in the decree of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy of Moscow and All Russia and the Holy Synod designating me as bishop of the Church of God was unexpected for me, and I, a sinner, bow my head to receive the new responsible obedience I am being charged with....

"In this responsible hour when the Lord commands me to lift a new cross on my shoulders, I firmly believe in and set all my hopes on God's help, the intercession of His Most Pure Mother and the prayers of all saints for me, an unworthy one. I receive it with profound faith in God's all-powerful grace, which healeth that which is infirm and completh that which is wanting. I receive it with the hope for the Lord's immutable promise to His followers: *Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and Ye shall be witnes-*



*ses, unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1. 8)....*

"I firmly hope and believe that the omnipotent and perfect, beneficent grace of God will complete my spiritual poverty, fortify my strength and help me in fulfilling my new obedience. I believe that *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean (Mt. 8. 2)*, and consecrate me.

"In the first place, I offer up my heart to the Great Chief Shepherd, our Lord Jesus Christ, with a fervent prayer, beseeching Him to help me in gaining God's grace. With a grieving heart I pray to the Mother of God beseeching Her to become my good helper and guide of the flock entrusted to me.

"Your Holiness, I repose hopes in Your God-wise primatial guidance and assistance and in Your constant loving care. Tomorrow, Your Holiness, and God-loving archpastors, when you lay your hands to bring down upon me the grace of the Holy Spirit, I ask for

your holy prayers so that *my strength is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor. 12. 9)*, so that, having become a teacher of others, I should not *receive the greater condemnation (Jas. 3. 1)*.

"Pray to the Lord to help me to become a worthy keeper of the purity of the church doctrine, a model of blameless service, *an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity (1 Tim. 4. 12)....*"

On August 26, during Divine Liturgy celebrated in the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Epiphany, the hierarchs who took part in the nomination, as well as Bishop Tikhon of Novosibirsk and Barnaul, consecrated Archimandrite Nikon as Bishop of Ufa and Sterlitamak.

After the Liturgy, presenting a hierarchal crozier to the newly-consecrated Bishop Nikon, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy delivered an oration in which he said in part:

"Your Grace, Bishop Nikon, our beloved brother in Christ and concelebrant!

"By the grace of the All-Holy Spirit you have now been consecrated for the feat of episcopal ministry to which you were called by the grace-filled and all-wise Divine Providence.

"On this holy day in your life, we, who have taken part in your consecration, congratulate you, our new brother, on receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which have made you a bearer of a special grace *which healeth that which is infirm and completeth that which is wanting*.

"Great and difficult is this feat, and we would have never coped with it with our poor strength, had God's grace not helped us to bear it to the glory of the Holy Church....

"Today you have promised in the face of the Church to watch over the flock whether they remain true to the faith, and in the exerci-



se of good works, more especially the Priests.

"This is a bishop's duty, which is hard today.

"Nowadays the Church's significance, her role in the process of society's renewal, in creating new forms of economic organization, in drafting new legislation, in the work of new administrative bodies consists in arousing man's forces which make him a full-fledged participant in social construction and spiritual renewal of society. What is the Church's attraction? Why have the people turned to her now? The Church attracts people by her example. People have turned to the Church knowing her spiritual experience, aptitude for sacrifice, her striving to help people, striving repeatedly tested by history. They have turned to her because they have become tired of the constant self-destruction, intolerance and internal division. Society expects much from the Church and *woe unto us* if we fail to live up to these expectations.

"Jesus Christ's call to people to show mercy for all without exception, made nearly two thousand years ago, is an immutable moral law for a Christian.

"Mercy alone can ensure a correct understanding of that which is the real evil, indicate correct ways of combating it, serve as a reliable guarantee against turning the struggle against evil into a cover for selfish individual or group interests.

"Mercy implies concern for people's health. And here it is extremely important to do everything possible in order to make people

of our and future generations sound not only physically, but, above all, morally. Countless instances have convinced us that a person, whose morals are shattered, ruins his own physical health and the health of his near ones.

"Educating her children in the spirit of Christian morality, the Church calls upon them to fight such evils as alcoholism, drug addiction, and moral dissoluteness. A careful attitude to nature, a rational use of her resources is one of the primary commandments given to man by God. Fulfilment of this commandment will be the believers' contribution to the settlement of ecological problems.

"This, our beloved brother, is the spiritual height to which you are called by the new ministry, and the feat it requires of you.

"In token of the spiritual strength, granted to you in the Sacrament, take this crozier, and may it become a support for you in your archpastoral labour, and now, from the plenitude of grace, bestow your first hierarchal blessing upon these people who have taken part in your consecration with their prayer."

\* \* \*

Bishop Nikon of Ufa and Sterlitamak (secular name Nikolai Vasyukov) was born in the village of Maryevka, Sampur District, Tambov Region, on October 1, 1950. In 1968 he finished secondary school and in 1974 graduated from the Krasnoyarsk State Medical Institute. He worked as a district therapist in a Krasno-

yarsk out-patients' clinic, and then spent two years in the army as a senior regimental doctor. From 1977 to 1983 he worked as the head of an out-patients' clinic in Leningrad Region.

On June 26, 1983, in the Kuibyshev Cathedral of the Protecting Veil, Archbishop Ioann of Kuibyshev and Syzran (now Metropolitan of Leningrad and Ladoga) ordained him deacon, and on September 21 of that year the same hierarchy ordained him presbyter and appointed him in this capacity to the Church of the Icon of the Mother of God "The Burning Bush" in Ulyanovsk. On March 13, 1984, Archbishop Ioann professed him with the name of Nikon, in honour of St. Nikon, Hegumen of Radonezh.

On September 16, 1985, His Eminence Ioann appointed him the Rector of the Ulyanovsk Church of the Icon of the Mother of God "The Burning Bush" and Superintendent Dean of the Ulyanovsk Diocese. On October 1, 1989, he became the Secretary of the Ulyanovsk Diocesan Administration.

In 1988 he visited the Holy Mount Athos together with a group of pilgrims.

He took part in the Local Councils of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1988 and 1990. In 1988 was elevated to the dignity of hegumen and awarded an ornamented cross. In 1990 was raised to the dignity of archimandrite.

In 1987 he finished the Leningrad Theological Seminary and three years later, in 1990, graduated from the Leningrad Theological Academy.

## Gift to the Russian Orthodox Church

In connection with a difficult economic situation in the USSR many Christian charitable and public organizations from abroad dispatch their humanitarian aid to the address of the Russian Orthodox Church. The ceremony of transferring to the representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate of the gift of the Ministry of Defence

of the Federal Republic of Germany took place on January 18, 1991, in Torgau (Germany). The gift, addressed to the Russian Orthodox Church and other Christian Churches in the Soviet Union, was evaluated at about 400 million German marks and included medicines, medical equipment and instruments, clothing, foodstuffs and

over 200 vehicles allocated out of the Bundeswehr reserves. The act of transference was signed on the German side by Dr. Wolfgang Burr, Director of the Economic and Foreign Departments of the FRG Ministry of Defence, and on the part of the Russian Orthodox Church—by Archbishop Longin of Düsseldorf. On the same day the



column of automobile wagons with cargoes started on the road. It was escorted by the representative of the Moscow Patriarchate in the person of Archpriest Anatoly Kolyada, Rector of the Aleksandr Nevsky Church in Postdam.

When crossing the border of the Polish Republic the column encountered certain difficulties connected with the demands from the Polish customs service to observe a number of formalities. The government and the Ministry of Defence of the FRG, and the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence, as well as the Command of the Group of Soviet troops stationed in Germany, in spite of the fact that the expenditure involved amounted to about 150,000 dollars, remained on the positions of humanity which, finally, resulted in overcoming the crisis. Through their efforts the conditions of the Polish side were fulfilled and on February 8 the latter adopted a decision to allow the passage of the column held on the border for more than two weeks. Soldiers had to put on civil clothes and military number-plates on the cars had to be replaced by company labels. After all demands had been fulfilled the caravan moved on.

The charitable gift was met by Aleksy II, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, military officials

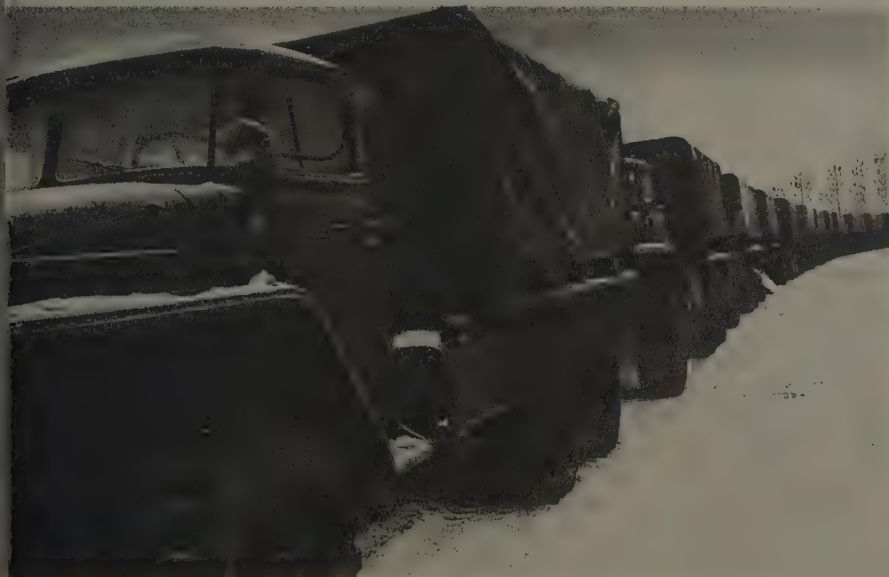


*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia during the giving over to the Russian Orthodox Church of the donation from Germany*

and the representative of the German Embassy, who gathered on the Khodynka field in Moscow. His Holiness said: "This caravan has made a long way. Today the cargo is handed over to the Russian Orthodox Church. For the most part it consists of technical appliances and equipment which is particularly valuable. It will be used for restoring churches and monasteries. We are witnesses today of the good being done. We render our thanks to the German

government and the Ministry of Defense for their act of good will which we interpret as the German people's desire to help us solve difficult problems confronting our people not only in the economic but in the social and spiritual spheres too. Thank you for your efforts, for your good deeds. This technical equipment will also serve good purposes, it will be used in restoring architectural monuments, part of the automobiles will be given to other Churches and religious organizations of our country."

Today the hierarchs, the clergy and all believers of the Russian Orthodox Church with feelings of deep gratitude accept this gift which demonstrates the solicitous attitude of the German people to the Russian people, to the Russian Orthodox Church and her needs at the present stage. This humanitarian act will become an important landmark in the history of the development of bilateral relations between the Churches and believers of our countries, between the peoples of the USSR and Germany.



*The column of cars loaded with the cargo meant for the Russian Orthodox Church arrived in Moscow*



# Starets Varsonofy Plekhankov of the Optina Hermitage

Varsonofy († 1913; secular name—Pavel Ivanovich Plekhankov), one of the last startsy of the Optina Hermitage, is the successor of the spiritual tradition of spiritual guidance coming from St. Paisy Velichkovsky. After the demise of St. Amvrosy of Optina (1891) the number of pilgrimages to the Optina Hermitage reduced; some of the pilgrims went to the Gethsemane Skete of the Trinity-St. Sergy Lavra to starets Varnava, and some—to the Righteous St. Ioann of Kronstadt. However, at the beginning of the 20th century, like during St. Amvrosy's lifetime, intelligentsia, students, young people began coming to the Hermitage again. Starets Varsonofy managed to put in order the monastic life of St. John the Baptist's Skete, which he headed in 1907-1912, not only by spiritual leadership but with the help of his personal means as well. Being a colonel he took the vows. Nearly ten years of the life of a recluse, studying of the Holy Fathers' heritage, spiritual activity under the guidance of the experienced teachers helped him acquire the gifts of the Grace. He took an honourable place among the startsy of the Optina. After his demise his spiritual children left the reminiscences called "Talks with Starets Varsonofy of the Optina Hermitage" (1907, typewriting). On the basis of these practically unknown materials an attempt is being made to write a brief version of the *Life* of the starets.

Starets Varsonofy was born on July 5, 1845 in Orenburg into a Cossack family with old traditions. His forefathers were merchants and millionaires. They owned a whole street in Samara—Kazanskaya Street. The family was under a special patronage of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God.

Pavel was born a very weak and fragile baby and his relatives thinking of the baby's possible death sent for the priest. The priest thrice immersed the new-born baby in water and it completely recovered. But his mother died during the delivery. Some time later his father got married again. "My stepmother was a very pious and kind woman, so she was like a mother to me. I even doubt that my mother could have given me such an upbringing," (here and below—quotations from the "Talks..."—*Ed.*)—recalled Father Varsonofy later. Thus, from the very first hour of his life, the Divine Providence directed the life of the future starets.

From his early childhood the boy got a habit of getting up early and going to the Matins. He kept his childish impressions in memory till the end of his life: "When I was three-four years old my father and I often went to church together, and many times when I stood by the icon of the Mother of God it seemed to me that She was looking at me, from the icon, smiling at me, calling me. I would run up to my father: 'Daddy, Daddy, She is alive,'—I would repeat. 'Who, my child?'—'The Mother of God!'"

The father loved his son and asked his wife not to wake him up so early and not to take him to the Matins so often. But she responded that she was in charge of the boy's upbringing and that she would do what she found best for him.

Since he was five years old the boy on the insistence of Father Aleksy, the village priest, was permitted to pray in the sanctuary. "You'll be a priest," he heard many times. Once, when the boy was six years old a strange thing happened. The family lived in the country-side, in their estate near Orenburg. The country house surrounded with a large park was well guarded by servants and dogs. So it was impossible to get inside unnoticed. One day the boy and his father were walking in the park. Suddenly an old man appeared before them. He approached them and said: "Remember, Father, your child will pull souls out of



the hell." Then the old man disappeared and the search was in vain, no guard saw the stranger.

All his life Father Varsonofy gratefully recalled his parents, services, prayers in the sanctuary, prayers he had said with his mother. When he became a monk he wrote to her: "Here are the fruits of your upbringing."



At the age of nine Pavel was sent to a gymnasium. There are practically no recollections of the days of his studies. Only in the "Diaries of Hieromonk Nikon Belyaev" (1907-1910, the Optina Hermitage) there is an episode written down from the words of the starets himself telling how being a gymnasist he wrote his future life prediction in verse.

On finishing the gymnasium Pavel entered the Potsk Military School. Then, a commissioned officer, he graduated from the Orenburg Specialized Military School. He is known to have finished the Cossack Officers' Courses in St. Petersburg, participated in battles on the border with Turkestan, then served in the Kazan Region Headquarters.

Recollections of Boris Ossovsky, whose family lived at Plekhankovs' in 1879, have come to our days. The recollections describe the life of Pavel Ivanovich, his mother, and his elderly aunt.

According to B. Ossovsky's recollections the Plekhankovs' family "had the strongest ties on Earth: their fervent and sincere belief in God and the desire to live according to His commandments" (letter from B. Ossovsky, included in the "Talks...", p. 356). Pavel Ivanovich always treated his mother with fearful respect and never contradicted her. In her turn she loved him as her own son.

It was already then that Pavel Ivanovich's life differed much from the life of other officers.

He never took part in balls or officers' parties, though always handed in a necessary sum of money not to offend his friends. He preferred to spend time in solitude or received guests in his own room which rather resembled a monk's cell. "...Icons in the corner, the burning lampada before them, a couch and two armchairs in white slip-covers, a bed neatly made, a small table in a space between the windows with a clock under a glass cover and a book-shelf on it." During peaceable conversations the host, always considerable and affable, would treat his guests to tea, jam and cookies. Never did alcoholic drinks appear on the table, never could foul language be heard in this house.

Everybody loved him for his behaviour and readiness to help.

In 1884 Pavel Ivanovich was transferred from Orenburg to Kazan, where he served till 1891, the year of his leaving for the Optina Hermitage.

Later, recalling these years of his life, Father Varsonofy would call them the years of gradual "withdrawal from the world". "The world is a monster that will tear him up who tries to make a sharp turn," he used to say. That is why it took him ten years to overcome temptations and doubts and to come to monkhood. The world did not want to let him go for a long time and he thought of the life in the monastery as "terribly dull: just black radish, vegetable oil and rows".

Though Pavel Ivanovich led a strict and ascetic life one cannot say that he had no secular interests. He had a passion for serious music, often went to the theatre, knew his favourite operas' scores, and had a perma-

nent seat in the stalls. Once in the theatre, during an opera premiere, a thought crossed his mind that he could die at that very moment and that his soul would not go to heaven. He became frightened at the thought. He left the theatre, put on his coat, took a cab, and went home. Since that day he never went to opera again. "My friends would come, and suggest that we share a box but I would always refuse under this or that pretext. And then something was wrong with my eyes and I've never been to the theatre again."

Much later he wondered who had helped him to leave the theatre that day. He found out that the premiere took place on October 4—St. Varsonofy's commemoration day.

Several times a question of getting married arose before Pavel Ivanovich. However, airs and graces and empty chatter of the ladies of the society only made him more determined not to get married at all. Once he was carried away by a girl who differed much from others, by her deep and gifted nature. But their acquaintance did not last long: she was bewailing the death of her love. Soon her family left for Samara. He recalled this acquaintance even 40-50 years later. When he reached 35 years of age his stepmother told him: "Why are you avoiding women, Pavel? You are getting older and soon nobody will agree to marry you." Being an obedient son Pavel decided to fulfil his stepmother's wish. The same evening at their friend's he made up his mind to talk to a woman who would sit beside him at dinner. And it was a...priest who sat beside him. They began talking about the Jesus Prayer. "I was so carried away by the talk,—recalled the starets later,—that I completely forgot about my intention to talk to women. And after the dinner I made a firm decision not to get married of which I informed my mother. She was very glad. She always wanted me to devote my life to God, but she never told me about it herself. God in his inscrutable ways led me to monastic life."

Gradually everything connected with the world was ceasing to exist for him. "God led me to spiritual rebirth by a number of coincidences which I regarded as simple events of my life and the meaning of which I realized only much later." One of the first such coincidences was a dream Pavel Ivanovich had in his youth. Very clearly he saw a starets approaching him. "What time is it now?"—"It's half past six."—"In three years you will die." He had this dream twice. The dream made a radical change in his soul. In the morning a friend of his came and invited him to a picnic. But he refused and from that day was avoiding amusements. With time he narrowed the circle of his friends down to two-three pious families. Now the thought of his death would never leave him.

Three years passed. The memorable day—September 17—came. In the morning of that day he left for the monastery alone for Confession and Holy Communion. After partaking of the Holy Gifts he thought "Now!..." The service ended and nothing seemed to change. But the words of the starets came true: he really died but died for the world. At this moment he started his





*The photograph of the Optina Hermitage taken at the beginning of the 20th century*

conscious way to the monastery.

In Kazan Pavel Ivanovich frequented St. John the Forerunner's Monastery founded by Ivan the Terrible. These visits began in the following way: once, during the Lent he postponed the fasting till the last week and went to the soldiers' church for Confession. On his way he paid attention to a small church of ancient architecture. He asked the passers-by about it, found out that it was a monastery, and decided to go for Confession there. This is the story written down from his words: "I entered and asked where I could find the priests (I did not know then that they were called hieromonks)."—"Whom exactly are you looking for?"—I was asked. "For a priest, I want to confess." I was shown an elderly hieromonk, Father Sergy. I came up to him. "What can I do for you?" he asked me. I told him that I wanted him to confess me. After the Confession I asked him "Where does this door lead?"—"To the hegumen of this monastery, Father Varsonofy."—"What a difficult name!"—"Why? The relics of St. Varsonofy repose in our monastery; you could go and pray before them."

Since then Pavel Ivanovich frequented the services in the cloister.

Much later when starets Varsonofy became head of St. John the Forerunner's Skete of the Optina Hermitage he recalled the monastery in Kazan: "Once in

the monastery my inner voice told me: 'Look, what a dirty, poor lampada. Buy a new, a better one.' I bought one and it pleased me to look at it. Then I bought an icon-case for a big icon. And thus I came to love everything in the monastery. Indeed: *For where your treasure is, there will your heart will be also* (Lk. 12. 34). For such trifles St. John the Baptist honoured me to be taken to his skete... Only much later I realized the meaning of the whole thing: in this poor and dirty monastery I saw the image of my inner spiritual state. Many years later, when I became head of the skete, I was asked: 'How will you keep the skete?' I answered: 'I don't think of it, even don't dare to—I am not the owner of it. I am just a steward of St. John the Baptist.'

Pavel Ivanovich's constant presence at the services in the monastery made a lot of talk among his colleagues, who did not understand how a person who was well received in many aristocratic families could prefer the company of monks. He was rumoured to be mad. Later Father Varsonofy recalled those days: "God did not leave me without consolation at that difficult time: I experienced moments of such spiritual excitement that I would gladly let my body be cut or burnt, or anything else." Thus three years passed. During his voyage along the Volga he visited different monasteries but he wanted to stay neither in any of them, nor in the monastery



of Kazan, where everybody knew him. One of his friends advised him to rely on God's will: pray and God will help you.

One day Pavel Ivanovich came to the headquarters with a report. An hour passed but the commander did not show up. The orderly told him that the commander did not feel well and that it was better not to wait for him. Going along the corridor Pavel Ivanovich noticed a small book on a table. It turned out to be a copy of *Vera i Razum* (Faith and Reason), a magazine published by Archbishop Amvrosy Klyucharev (†1901) in Kharkov. In this magazine for the first time Pavel Ivanovich read about the Optina Hermitage and starrets Amvrosy to whom thousands of pilgrims streamed from all over Russia. He was the man who could resolve all doubts. Pavel Ivanovich submitted a leave report. "It's high time that you have a change of scene, you have been sitting here for ten years, besides your health leaves much to be desired," said the commander. Pavel Ivanovich received a month's leave and went to Optina. It was in August of 1889. In the cloister he told Father Amvrosy of his wish to take the vows. "The test should continue for two more years," said the starrets, "then come and I shall accept you." Besides the starrets gave him an obedience: to make donations for certain churches. He also advised him to wait for two years to tender his resignation.

On his return to Kazan Pavel Ivanovich sold out all his furniture and moved to the furnished rooms. Not to be alone he sheltered a twelve-year-old boy, the son of a boots with whom he got on well. Later the boy also entered the monastery.

Several months after his trip to the Optina Hermitage, in November, Pavel Ivanovich fell seriously ill. The doctor and the priest were sent for—he was unlikely to survive. When the priest came and began confessing Pavel Ivanovich he had strength only to respond: "Sinful, sinful...". After the Confession he felt better, however the doctor said that he would hardly live till the morning. Everybody left. Beside him the batman only stayed who had to read the Gospel.

The depth of the Gospel was revealed to the dying man. It was a spiritual transformation which led to the healing of the body. In the morning everybody was surprised to find Pavel Ivanovich alive. For two more months he had to fight against the disease. Every day the batman came to read the Gospel. Many doubts were resolved during the disease. Possibly it was then that his inner "withdrawal from the world" was completed.

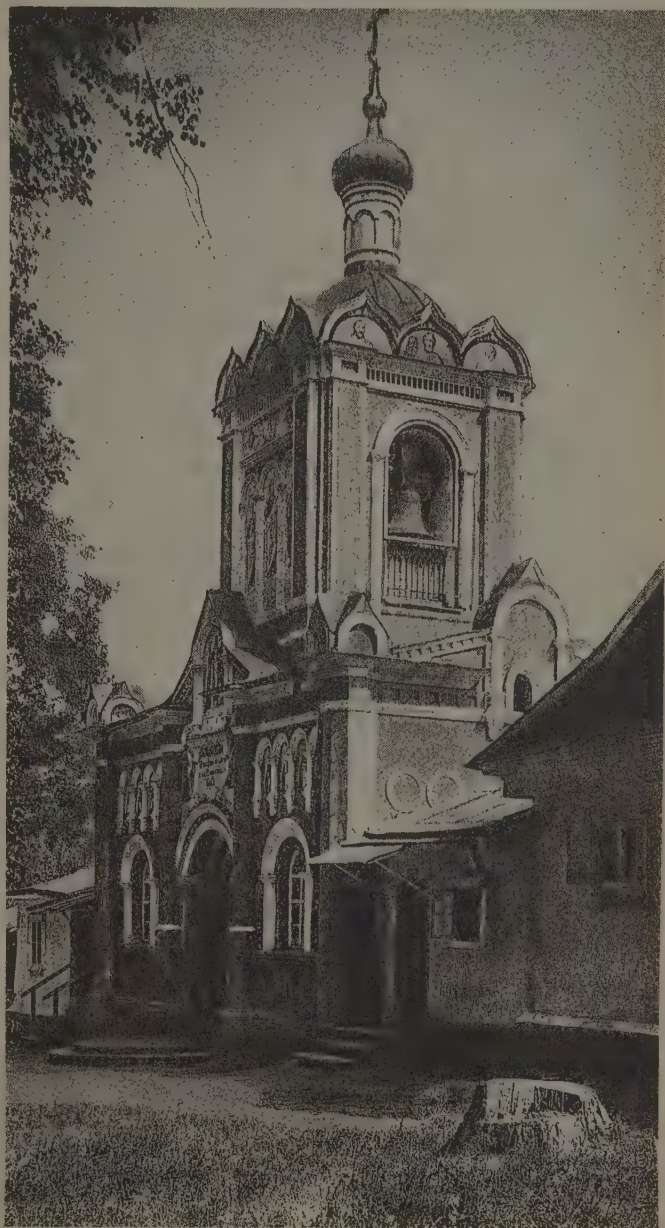
Recovered, Pavel Ivanovich began putting his secular affairs in order and preparing to leave for Optina. In 1890 he went to the Chernigovsky Skete of the Trinity-St. Sergy Lavra to pray to St. Sergy and receive the blessing of Father Varnava. When Pavel Ivanovich asked for a blessing the starrets said: "You've caught a cold, you should get married." These words confused him. Later in the Optina Hermitage Father Anatoly explained him the meaning of these words: "Every Christian soul is a bride of Christ, that is why it is necessary to get married which

means to join *unto the Lord*. While the words 'you've caught a cold' mean a spiritual illness from which a man suffers *until Christ is formed in him*."

The same year Pavel Ivanovich went to Orenburg to ask for a blessing for the monastic life from his mother. It was very sad to walk about the town where his childhood and youth had passed and from where the civilization was gradually ousting the patriarchal, simple way of life.

The two-year term fixed by Father Amvrosy was expiring. All affairs seemed to be put in order. Pavel Ivanovich was going to the Optina Hermitage again.

*The Belfry of the Optina Hermitage Skete of St. John the Forerunner*





One of the last days before his departure he was going home in a cab from his friend to whom he was paying his last visit. He was deep in his thought, but when the cab was passing the Trinity Church with a big icon of the Saviour full length with outstretched arms on the wall something, as it was made him lift his eyes and deep in his heart a voice said: "Now you are mine." Tears of emotion filled his eyes. Christ Himself seemed to say: *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest* (Mt. 11.28).

Soon Pavel Ivanovich went to Optina through Moscow where one more significant event happened to him. He was going in a cab dressed in military uniform with a sword. When he was passing the Teatralnaya or the Red Square (being absorbed in thoughts Pavel Ivanovich did not remember the exact place) somebody suddenly snatched the sword on which he was leaning. The cabman drove fast and Pavel Ivanovich only just turned around—nobody was in the square. When he came to starets Amvrosy who was in Shamordino at that time and told him what had happened, he heard in reply: "There is nothing strange about it. You don't need the sword any more. Here is a spiritual sword for you to fight with an invisible enemy of our salvation..."—and he handed a rosary to him.

This time Father Amvrosy blessed his retirement and told him to come by Christmas.

Pavel Ivanovich went back to Kazan. The boy whom he had sheltered told him that he had seen him in a dream. He was going from town to the cemetery singing the irmos: "Having passed over the water as on dry land and escaped Egypt's evils...". "Later the dream was explained to me in the following way", Father Varsonofy recalled, "'town' means 'the world'; the cemetery which in Kazan is situated in the east meant Holy Jerusalem; I was going from town to the cemetery to die for the world; my white clothes meant purification of my soul because at that time I decided to leave everything; irmos 'Having passed over the water as on dry land...' is sung at the burial service for babies and means withdrawal from the world."

On his arrival to St. Petersburg with a resignation application Pavel Ivanovich was offered rank of general; his friends who were against his resignation

found a bride for him, the resignation and money receipt were being delayed which caused the problem of paying the debts. But Father Varnava helped him: he told him where to get the money. Only his mother was praying for his monastic life.

Finally all the trouble was left behind. On December 17, the memorable for him feast day of the Three Holy Youths Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, Pavel Ivanovich left Kazan forever. On December 21 he came to Moscow again and stayed there three days. In the "Talks..." there is a narration of these last days in the world: "On the eve of the commemoration day of St. Peter I went to the Church of Christ the Saviour to the All-Night Vigil. Semi-darkness prevailed in the church especially in the cupola. I did not like the choir and began to feel tired and impatient. I decided to look for another church with a better choir. A man stood beside me. 'Could you tell me, please, if there is a church with a good choir in Moscow?' I asked him.—'But this one is a wonderful choir.'—'I don't like it at all.'—'It's because the precentor is not here. Wait a bit, he is likely to come soon!'

"I thought: since I am going to take the vows I should learn to be patient, and stayed in the church. At that moment the choir sang irmos: *Christ is born, give ye glory*, and I realized suddenly that these words as well as the following ones: *our exalted horn...*, are applied to me. But what has happened? The choir's singing has completely changed: the precentor has come. In an inexplicable spiritual excitement, I have never experienced before, I stayed till the end of the All-Night Vigil. Unlike the first part of the service which was wearisome the second was triumphant and rejoicing. The next day I went to the Liturgy to some unknown church and when I entered a priest with a chalice in his hand exclaimed: *Now, and ever, and unto ages of ages*. And the choir started singing: *Let our mouths be filled with Thy praise, O Lord!*

"By Christmas I was in the monastery."

He found starets Amvrosy in the coffin.

Priest ALEKSANDR MARCHENKOV

(To be continued)



# The First All-Church Congress of the Orthodox Youth

## ADDRESS

Delivered by His Holiness Patriarch ALEKSY II  
at the Opening of the Congress, January 25, 1991

I am glad to greet and bless the Congress of the Orthodox Youth. I hope, of course, that those gathered in this hall is only a small part of the young people who to the question: "What are you?" reply in the first place: "I am an Orthodox Christian." And I am offering thanks to the Lord Who continues to call workers to His vineyard. This vineyard is common to us all, and those who are called to work on it include all believers and not only hierarchs of the Church. You have understood, thanks be to God, that the life of the Church is your life, that the Church's cross is your cross, and the Church's sorrows are your sorrows.

But I should like to remind you, who wish to work in the Church, of the words of Father Aleksandr Shmen-man about the religious conversion of the Russian intelligentsia of the beginning of this century: "Though subconsciously, deep in his soul, but the Russian intellectual is convinced that the Church needs him more than he needs her, and, therefore, no sooner does he cross her threshold than he begins not so much to save himself in her as to save her." It would be a great mistake to assume that for you the Church is a place to apply your forces and talents. The Church is not an object of your activity and concern. She is rather the source of everything living and spiritual, bright and creative that is acting in you. And it depends on man merely whether he gives or does not give room in his soul and life for this transformative and sanctifying impulse, issuing from God through the Church, to act and bring forth fruit.

I am confident that your labours will be of spiritual use only if they are based on a clear church, ecclesiological consciousness.

The Church is granted to people to enable them to partake of Divine Life. The source of all being—God—becomes open and accessible to people in Christ. *Thou didst not come as an emissary or an angel, Lord, but from a Virgin, taking flesh and saving the fulness of my humanity.*

The most important task of the Orthodox youth is to bear witness to the Truth. But we cannot say anything about the essence of God Who is above this world. We can only say how from His remoteness God enters our souls, and what happens to man when he meets with God, i. e., we can only speak about the Kingdom of God that has already reached us. There are very few words which we dare to say about the Most Holy Trinity. But countless are the words we use

trying to witness to that abode of the Trinity in our soul about which the Lord said: *If a man love me... we will come unto him, and make abode with him* (Jn. 14. 23). God Who abides and acts deep in human heart is the God-man, He is our Church. And it is to the possibility, accessibility and effectiveness of this communion with God that we can and must witness.

In its essence the Christian sermon is not a sermon about the Absolute, nor is it a narration about the events that once occurred in the Land of Palestine. Christian sermon is witnessing to the birth of the Church as a God-man organism which was the fruit of those salvific events. Therefore Church witness should be in the centre of the whole Christian mission. A preacher should not only tell of Christ but also show the way to Him, help people to see the holy land where alone a true communion with God is possible. And, of course, from the very start people should be informed of the rules of entering this "holy ground" and the rules of life on it, i. e. that there are certain "shoes" which, according to the Holy Writ, should be "put off" on entering this holy ground (Ex. 3. 5). We should teach from the very outset not only about the existence of an ontological mystery of the Church, but also about reverence before her.

A preacher's first and last words should be about the Church, and her reality. Without this Christianity degenerates into ideology or a philosophical sect.

And today, in particular, while speaking about the Gospel it is impossible not to speak about the Church and her mysterious and spirit-bearing life. And many find this hard and unaccommodating. In her spiritual, ontological depth the Church is a source of sanctification and healing. But we delve into this source not completely and do not stay in it permanently. We ourselves do not allow to heal ourselves the way the Saviour wants: *I have made a man every whit whole* (Jn. 7. 23). We ourselves make Christianity only a small part of our life and then complain: why does Christianity turn out to be of little effect in us and in others? We are often aggrieved that both lay members of the Church and clergymen are affected by spiritual ailments. But there is only one reason for this malady: it is impossible to be only half-Christian or, say, to be Christian only on Sundays. There is only one way of being a Christian: to be completely, entirely, always.

For every person who is attentive to his spiritual life it is clear that the Church is a hospital where sick



people come and where, alas, they may remain unhealed. As the Holy Fathers say, grace does not force anyone. But if a person perceives in himself the roots of his being unhealed, he begins to see more clearly also the causes of the infirmity of other people. The causes of temptations and bitter mistakes, and sins committed over the bimillennial path of the Christian Church also become clear. I want to remind you of the words of Father Valentin Sventsitsky: "Every sin in the Church is not a sin of the Church, but a sin against the Church."

It is too tempting to reduce the life of the Church to actions of her administration. And many prefer to look at the Church precisely from this point of view, seeing in her a certain ethnographic colour, superstitions of old women and ambitions of hierarchs.

Why do many people prefer to see things through such eyes? Because it is easier for them: for if there is no mystery in the Church, that means she does not carry within herself the Gospel's eternal challenge, and a person then does not enter a situation of choice and, consequently, nothing gnaws at his conscience.

But similar eyes saw in Jesus Christ a mere vagrant preacher. It is through such eyes that Mikhail Bulgakov's Pilate looks at Christ. And it is only the Church, that, through the Holy Spirit that abides in her, was able to see Christ not through the eyes of the mob, but through spiritual vision.

Christ's Divinity is covered by *the veil of His flesh* (Heb. 10. 20). And therefore his Divine being is so obvious that disbelief in Him becomes a sin, and at the same time it is so unobvious that belief in Him becomes a virtue.

This is also true of the Church's historical existence. A strange and cold look will not reveal in her life anything apart from a play of human and political passions and, at the most, may marvel at "the skill with which churchmen adapt their ancient dogmata to any contemporary situation".

But we know that our Church has a different life, which is not our own but is granted to us. And it takes affectionate and believing eyes to perceive the breath of grace in the life of that Church, whose name cannot be spelled other than with a capital letter.

And I ask you to take above all an affectionate attitude to the Church in all your activity. Remember

that we all make up one body. Each organ has its own illnesses, but we should grieve together over them. And inasmuch as most of you come from the Russian intelligentsia, I ask you not to bring to the Church the intellectuals' habit to think in "we" and "they" categories, where "we" stands for a certain intelligent minority having no rights, and "they" for the stagnant and dull "authorities".

As the Patriarch and a representative of these "authorities" I should like to see in you my kind and reliable assistants, and I hope that you will help me and my fellow-archpastors and share our concerns with us.

I should also like to remind you of a monastic observation: "It takes a lot of patience in the secular world and many times as much in a monastery." When people live and work together they have to suffer not only from their own but also from their confrères' ailments. If you have decided to pool your efforts in defence of Orthodoxy, you should always remember that you inherit not only spiritual assets of your brethren but also that your shortcomings will become yet another heavy cross for all the rest of them, and each of you will have to meekly and patiently endure mistakes and shortcomings of your near ones. Hurry not to condemn, hurry not to be angry, hurry not to separate. I refer these words to myself as well, of course. I understand that the cause you now assume is bound to go through numerous temptations, and I hope that the Lord will grant me the spiritual wisdom required to receive all without exception with affection and understanding.

Alas, errors are also inevitable in my new ministry as Patriarch. I hope that your youthful and neophyte maximalism will not judge me too severely.

The time we are entering now calls for a sacrificial stance in behalf of Orthodoxy. And we can fulfil our duty only if we, all of us, plead for Christ's grace to strengthen us and only if it attends us. I pray that the Lord grant you His help in your labours and guard you against temptations and deviations. I ask you to pray for me, too. And so let us love one another that with one accord we may confess the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

May the All-Merciful Lord guard you all. And may the prayers of the Most Holy Mother of God and all our saints abide with you all.



## Notes from the Congress

In recent time much has been said about the role of the Christian public, the importance of the social service of laymen and about the fact that in his church activity a Christian cannot limit himself to his church. Today life itself provides answers to our questions. Quite recently a Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods has been founded with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia, and on January 25-27, 1991, the First All-Church Congress of the Orthodox Youth was held. It is significant that the premises for the congress were provided by Moscow State University; the moleben and inaugural ceremony were held in the former university church dedicated to St. Tatiana the Martyr. For all we know the time might be in the offing when regular divine services will again be conducted in this church.

After the moleben the assembly was addressed by His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia. The plenary session was opened by Archbishop Kirill of Smolensk and Kalinigrad, Head of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate.

The need for founding the Orthodox youth movement was realized in Russia already before the Revolution, but the subsequent period of the theomachist terror prevented good initiatives from fruition. And yet it was precisely at that time that the movement of the Russian Orthodox youth became widespread abroad in the context of democratic freedoms, and the Russian Student Christian Movement, founded on the initiative of Fr. Sergy Bulgakov, became a genuine beacon of Orthodox spi-

rituality and culture, the keeper of the spirit of church creativity and active missionary activity. The Orthodox Youth Movement of Russians Abroad could not have been successful if it had not drawn on the tradition of the early 20th-century religious renaissance. For us this brilliant epoch is not simply the acme of Russian culture, but that culminating moment of the natural historical development of Russia which was followed by a catastrophic collapse. Any advance along the road of spiritual and cultural creative activity is hardly possible for the Orthodox youth in present-day Russia without a thorough assimilation of the entire heritage of that epoch and without taking due account of its mistakes.

Even in the dark years of mass persecutions Christian life in Russia went on by God's providence. The Bloodless Sacrifice continued to be offered in the few surviving churches, and the community life, whose active participants were under a constant threat of imprisonment and deportation, never stopped in conditions of underground. Thus, the life of the Rus-

sian Orthodox Church mystically remained integral, in spite of the obvious incompleteness.

Attempts are being made to revive the traditions of an effective social service, spiritual enlightenment, and an active preaching of the word of God. At the end of the 1960s, and particularly in the early and mid-1970s, attempts were made in difficult conditions to form Orthodox brotherhoods, catechetical circles and to hold theological seminars, which were suppressed from without, of course. Mention should be made of the activity of some priests, such as Aleksandr Men, Dmitry Dudko and others, whose communities developed into veritable brotherhoods, joining people not only spiritually at the Eucharistic chalice but also uniting them in an active social service, in their striving to preach their faith, despite the vehement opposition of the theomachist forces possessing great power in this world.

Today we can confidently say that the situation in this country has changed considerably. We shall not discuss here the political



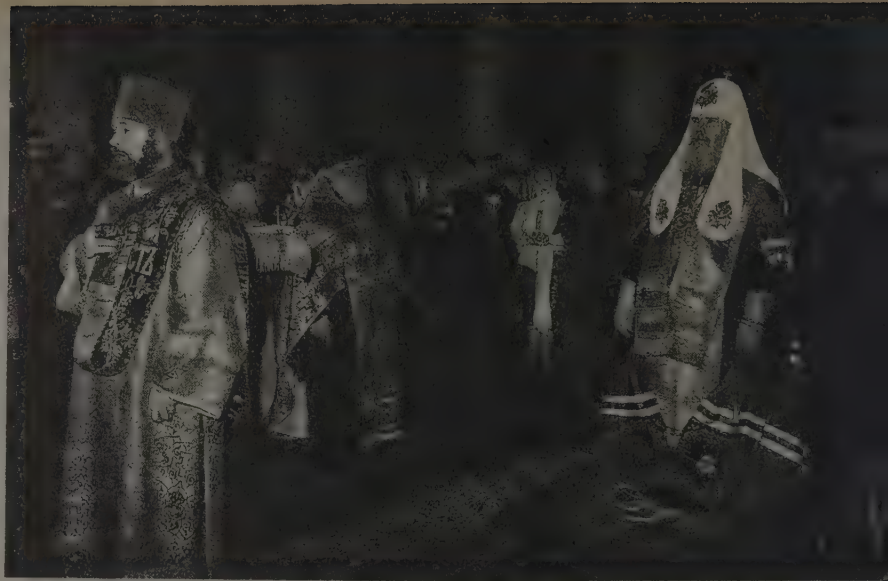
*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy conversing with Academician A. Logunov, Rector of the Moscow State University*



*His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy carrying out the moleben to St. Tatiana the Martyr at the Moscow State University, January 25, 1991*

reasons that prompted the state to change its official attitude to the Church. In any case it is doubtless that the present situation creates extremely favourable conditions for all hitherto uncoordinated aspects of Christian service to be really brought together. Yet various dangers and temptations lie in wait for us on this path. It is profoundly significant that in the period when unfavourable external conditions prevented the unity of the Church, spiritual unity was providentially preserved, whereas at the moment when conditions were provided for it to take shape organizationally, all schisms and disarrangements have begun to deepen within the Church, gradually evolving into a danger which is perhaps even more terrible than the brutal persecutions of the past. Under these conditions the need for a church movement having adequate autonomy is particularly obvious. This movement would unite all sound forces of the Church, help the hierarchs and the clergy to materialize in concrete empirical reality that spiritual unity which is characteristic of all the real members of the Church. It is to be hoped that the above-mentioned Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods and the nascent all-Church movement of the Orthodox youth will become such unifying factors.

In their speeches His Holiness Aleksy, Archbishop Kirill and other speakers emphasized the serious danger threatening the nascent movement. In the first place it is connected with the influx of non-church and quasichurch intelligentsia to the Church. (Actually, this process is a continuation of the one which began at the turn of the century and was interrupted in 1917.) For this part of the neophytes who will undoubtedly play a very important role in the movement, there is a danger that, having crossed the threshold of the Church, they will continue,



as before, to view her life and problems with an "external" eye. His Holiness the Patriarch reminded the congress participants of the words of Father Aleksandr Shmeman who said that, as they come to the Church, many intellectuals seek to "save" the Church rather than save themselves, and, not being sufficiently churched and not having fathomed her innermost life, assume the role of reformers. We could also refer to the words said much earlier by S. Bulgakov, the future priest, about the feature typical of intellectuals' consciousness which substitutes "intelligentsia's heroism" for Christian asceticism, the external for the internal, an occasional spurt of the isolated "ego", taking pride in its imaginary spiritual loftiness, for meekness and repentance.

Special attention should also be paid to that part of Archbishop Kirill's speech in which he described the principal task of the nascent movement as "the revival of the parish as a true Christian community with the Divine Eucharist in the centre, and a large-scale social, catechetical, charitable, youth and other work in the periphery". The very posing of this task, which is now regarded as something natural, does not merely testify to a change in the religious situation. To all probability we will

soon have to admit (and this was pointed out in a number of speeches delivered at the congress) that the revival of church life in Russia is closely connected with the change of the very type of religiosity. In the years of stagnation and active preaching of the faith of Christ in the world was the lot of the chosen few, whereas we must take an active part in the churching of the world. Therefore, being an integral part of the Church on the one hand, the participants in the movement should, on the other, serve as a sort of transitional connecting link between the innermost, mystical life of the Church and the external world which is subject to churching.

As we see it, one of the main problems of the Orthodox youth movement consists in the establishment of the right and proper relations with the hierarchs and with the laymen. If it claims to remain a church movement, it cannot conceive itself outside the canonical subordination to the episcopate, for, according to Orthodox notions, it is precisely a bishop's presence in an assemblage of worshippers that makes it a Church. Where there is no bishop, there is no Church. As was justly pointed out by many speakers, those who deny this should join another confession. At the same



time, a movement will lose its purpose if it is imposed from above. It should naturally follow from the Church's inner need, rise spontaneously from below. If one is to remain faithful to the spirit of churchiness, one should never identify church hierarchs with "chiefs", whom young people have grown so tired of obeying in secular life. It should be remembered that the Church is a God-man establishment, and for members of the Church a bishop is not a "chief", but an archpastor, who, through apostolic succession, bears archpastoral grace of Christ Himself. On their part, bishops, too, should always take a responsible approach to their lofty archpastoral mission. It should not be forgotten that there are laymen who are very close to the "chiefs", and there are bishops who are indissolubly linked with the people, who know their needs, being their educators and spiritual guides.

Therefore the statement made by a congress delegate, deacon Oleg Stenyaev, in which he called for "guarding laymen against the dictate of hierarchs", should be recognized as inconsistent and not faultless canonically. Laymen should be guarded not against dictate of hierarchs as such but against those who substitute human cause for the cause of God.

The congress delegates devoted considerable attention to the discussion of urgent tasks which will have to be tackled in the nearest future, namely acts of charity, spiritual and educational work with children and young people which should include the organization of Sunday schools for children, summer youth camps, and large-scale catechetical work among the population. It should not be forgotten that by the level of their church consciousness and religious education many grown-ups in this country are by far inferior to many children in religiously-educated families.

Taking part in the work of the congress were guests from the USA, France, Finland, Poland, representatives of international organizations.

In his paper "Theology and Work with the Youth" Archpriest Prof. Thomas Hopko shared with the congress participants the vast experience accumulated by the Orthodox Church in America in the field of spiritual and educational work. This experience is interesting for us especially by the fact that in America Orthodoxy exists in conditions of a religious mentality totally different from ours. In Russia, Prof. Hopko said, the Church is perceived by mass consciousness as a place more suitable for old women, whereas in America, as a place for children. For this reason the entire external activity of the Church there is above all devoted to work with children, and therefore from the moment he enters the church a child feels himself not in a strange, incomprehensible world, but in a close community with his equals in faith. For "the reason of belief", i. e., the first impulse awakening conscious faith in a child's soul, is, above all, communion with worshippers, of course, rather than teaching its "fundamentals" providing only the indispensable knowledge. Leaders of religious

youth movements should in the first place be good Christians.

The paper entitled "The Orthodox Youth and Society's Culture", presented by Archpriest John Matusiak, a representative of the Orthodox Church in America, is in tune with that of Father Thomas. In Fr. John's opinion, the doctrinate tone is most harmful in the work with young people. For a person who devoted himself to the education of children and young people the most important thing is not so much to instruct as to listen to and understand spiritual requirements of young people. The primary task is to cultivate communal spirit in young people, without which there can be no real churchiness.

A communication by the representative of the "Syndesmos"—World Fellowship of the Orthodox Youth, an organization which the nascent movement is going to join, and information about the history of the present-day activity of scouts were listened to with great attention.

Chairman of the Russian Christian Movement, K. Yelchani-nov, took part in the work of the congress as guest. He also took the floor and pointed out that the idea of youth religious organizations had been brought to Russia from the West shortly before the Revolu-



*In the Assembly Hall housing the First All-Church Congress of the Orthodox Youth, January 25, 1991*



tion. Subsequently, in emigration, many people perceived Orthodoxy as a true core of Russia's spiritual and cultural life, and having come to the Church, many representatives of Russian emigration fully realized their mission of preserving and multiplying spiritual legacy. In the speaker's opinion, the Russian Christian Movement Abroad has practically accomplished its mission: its future is linked with Russia.

Father Sergy Bezchasny of the Russian Orthodox Church, familiarized the congress with concrete plans of the All-Church Orthodox Youth Movement.

Regrettably, it should be said that the organizers of the congress, who in its programme allotted sufficient time for guests to address the congress, provided only for a general discussion of representatives of dioceses—direct congress participants. To all probability, they viewed the Russian experience of the Soviet period as insignificant. And yet in the course of the congress' work it became clear that any mechanical transfer of foreign experience to present-day Russian soil can hardly be successful: it should not be forgotten that the problems facing Christians in the West vastly differ from those we are confronted with now after seventy years of the "Babylonian captivity". Mention could be made also of the statements and remarks by a very active priest, Gennady Yakovlev (Irkutsk Diocese), representatives of the Ukraine, Moscow, the Stavropol and Vilno dioceses. Still, Fr. Bezchasny, who was in the chair, insisted on giving priority to discussion of the Rules and the formation of the organizational structure of the movement, considering these issues to be most important, "precisely that for which



*In the Presidium of the First All-Church Congress of the Orthodox Youth: His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia and Archbishop Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Head of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate*

we have assembled here". In the course of this discussion, the questions touched upon were mostly related to the range of problems which has already been presented above in general outline: in the first place the congress clarified the status of the movement, the degrees of its independence, and relation to the church structures. Among the questions put to the congress were: Can the movement delegate its representatives to a Local Council? To what extent and in what forms can it exert influence on the appointment of priests to parishes, and so on. Opinions were voiced that in principle the movement could help the Church to go over to the old practice of electing priests by the community itself. The overwhelming majority of speakers expressed concern over

the danger of the movement becoming "overly organized".

The congress participants elected the leading bodies of the movement. Bishop Aleksandr of Kostroma and Galich became its chairman, and representatives of the laity—Olga Yanushkyavichus (Vilno Diocese) and Vladislav Pustovoi (Vinnitsa Diocese)—vice-chairmen.

The work of the congress was rounded off with a common prayer during All-Night Vigil in the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Epiphany, at which Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia officiated. Participants in the movement united around the Eucharistic chalice formed a truly church brotherhood of people.

GRIGORY MUKHIN



## Bishop Aleksandr of Kostroma: The Time to Do Good...

The First All-Church Congress of the Orthodox Youth, held on January 25-27, 1991, adopted a decision to constitute the All-Church Orthodox Youth Movement and elect Bishop Aleksandr of Kostroma and Galich its Chairman. The Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, chaired by Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia, approved this decision at its session on January 31. Ye. Komarov, *The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* correspondent, approached Bishop Aleksandr with a few questions.

Your Grace, the First All-Church Congress of the Orthodox Youth was convened without long preparatory work and, perhaps, seemed unexpected to some people. But, apparently, in the context of the entire church life of this country organizational constitution of the Orthodox youth cannot be regarded as either accidental or unexpected, don't you think so?

Surely. In our time when many things are regenerated in our Church—including charity and social service—we must have an organization which would unite energetic young Christians on all-church, regional, diocesan and parochial levels. There is no doubt that it is necessary to organize this movement, give it a definite juridical status so that it may declare its existence publicly.

For many years it was "not recommended" even to mention the fact that there were young people associated with the Church. In compliance with such "recommendations" young faces were carefully erased from photographs published in church periodicals. But even during the years of hard atheistic pressure on the part of the state young people did attend the Church though they could not take an active part in the social activity initiated by the Church. Nowadays, when external conditions have become rather favourable, the tasks facing the church



youth are truly immense. They include active participation in Christian enlightenment, missionary work, catechization, charitable activity, philanthropy and care of the good estate of the Church and of God's temples. But the most important mission of the Christian youth movement is to bring its members to the Church. In the course of decades, when mass religious instruction of the youth was forbidden, the level of piety among young people became very low and today—before they begin to enlighten others—they themselves must be initiated to the Church and learn not only the fundamentals but also the summits of faith and piety. Therefore, the words that His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy addressed to the Youth Congress are very opportune. They express the idea that young people must not regard the Church as merely an object for applying their forces, as a place where they can manifest and realize their potentialities. One must enter the Church with a feeling of repentance, like the prodigal son. So initiation of

the youth to the Church is today the principal task of the All-Church Orthodox Youth Movement.

Vladyka, the moleben before the opening of the Congress as well as its first session addressed by His Holiness the Patriarch took place in the former university church of St. Tatiana the Martyr whose feast was celebrated as the "day of students" for Moscow University was founded on that very day. Now a student theatre is housed in the former church... The main sessions of the Congress were held in the auditorium of the University's old building, which was given the name of Lenin after the Revolution. In this auditorium students listened to lectures not only on literature or history but also on "scientific" atheism and dialectical materialism; meetings of the Young Communist League (Komsomol) were also held here. Don't you think that the Church "Komsomol" has been formed at our Congress?

That's an interesting question. I am sure that what we have formed is not the Church "Komsomol". And the main difference lies, of course, in the very essence of the matter: one of the principal tasks of the Young Communist League was the materialistic upbringing of young people, that is, leading them away from God, whereas the Orthodox Movement endeavours to initiate young people to the Church, lead them to Christ and in this way amend those appalling moral distortions which all of us today witness in society with horror and which are a direct result of godless upbringing.

The Orthodox Youth Movement is not created by a decree of the authorities. Unlike various artificial formations it naturally grows out of the entire context of the ecclesiastical life of our days as an integral part of spiritual regeneration. There is one more distinction here: we have given an organized form to the movement and not just declared the existence



of some still-born league. The focus of any church organization is not a bureaucratic central organ but Eucharistic communion, common prayer, spiritual life in Christ. The preponderance of free creative elements over bureaucratic practices has found reflection in the choice of the name: "movement".

Do you think you'll manage to avoid the temptation of "too much organizational work" and "bureaucratic routine", which is especially undesirable when working with the youth?

Yes, we will, if we take an ecclesiastic approach. Speeches of the Congress delegates convinced me that in spite of the fact that most of them had learned about the Congress just a few days before it began, almost all came with their own proposals and plans: rich experience of work among the youth has been accumulated virtually in every region—from the Vilno and Latvian dioceses to those of Stavropol and Irkutsk. The task of the movement, therefore, is to coordinate and unite efforts undertaken in various localities, provide methodological aid and organize exchange of experience. For this purpose the Congress elected the Chairman, two co-chairmen, a secretary and also formed regional affiliated societies each uniting several neighbouring dioceses.

It is not an easy task to constitute an organizational structure that would not subdue but stimulate local initiative. We lack experience. To be sure, even before the Revolution there did not exist

a single Orthodox youth organization in Russia. The Congress listened with interest to the speeches made by guests from the youth organizations of the USA, France and Finland; but some of our delegates pointed out quite rightly that we must not copy their experience in every detail: the conditions of work among young people and of ecclesiastical work generally are very peculiar in present-day Russia.

You say that your election as Chairman of the movement was quite unexpected for you. What were your first thoughts after your election? After all, you are the only bishop in this movement and, perhaps, the oldest among its participants...

Born in 1957, I am one of the youngest bishops in our Church. But it seems to me that there were people older than I among the delegates: those who work with the youth, such as teachers of Sunday schools and diocesan educational establishments... The Fathers of the Church say: "Where there is a bishop there is the Church", so it is quite natural for a bishop to lead the church movement. The practice of stagnation years, the low level of ecclesiastical consciousness in our days sometimes lead to a situation when one or another participant in the social activity of the Church or even a member of the clergy tries to counterpose himself to the Plenitude of the Church and the hierarchy. This is fraught with a danger of splits. But hierarchs, clergy and laity alike, including young people who sometimes are

prone to arbitrary moods more than anybody else, must work in concert for the cause of God and only in that case all of them together represent the Church. I believe that the movement of the Orthodox youth constituted with the blessing of the Supreme Authority of the Church will foster this unity. I also believe that very soon, perhaps, even before this interview is published, we'll have to convene the second congress, not an inaugural congress this time, but the congress to discuss once more and elaborate the statutes of the Movement and to sum up the first results of regional activity.

How will the local youth movement in Kostroma be affected by the fact that the Diocesan Bishop leads the analogous all-church movement?

I think, only in a favourable way: this will give an additional impetus to the youth movement in the Kostroma Diocese with its centre in the diocesan school (its rector and two students represented our diocese at the First Congress) and in the catechetical school for children and adults. Literally during the days when the Congress was in session both these schools received more spacious premises at the decision of the local authorities. Our initiatives in the sphere of charity, catechization and missionary work will be discussed by the Kostroma youth at its Diocesan Congress during Lent which, according to the Bible and the doctrine of the Holy Fathers is just the time for charitable deeds, the time to *depart from evil and do good* (Ps. 34. 14).



# The First Divine Service in the Cloister

Ringling of the church bells on the frosty morning of February 5, 1991, heralded the regeneration of the Anastasyinsky Monastery of the Epiphany in Kostroma. On that day—the Feast of St. Gennady of Kostroma († 1565) and of the Synaxis of the Kostroma Saints—Bishop Aleksandr of Kostroma and Galich celebrated the first Divine Liturgy in the Epiphany Cathedral of the cloister.

“The revival of the Epiphany Cathedral is our most urgent and vital task for after its restoration it is destined to become a cathedral church... We regard restoration of the cathedral as a great patriotic deed... We expect that residents of Kostroma will give us their most active and efficient assistance,” said Bishop Aleksandr in his address published in April 1990 by the *Blagovest* (church bell ringing) newspaper of the Kostroma Diocese. The periodical fully reflects the contribution of the Kostroma Diocese and the Church in general to the promotion of our Motherland’s spiritual revival. Today, when the lamp of faith and piety was lit again in the very heart of Kostroma—in its historical centre—this should be taken as one more result of untiring efforts on the part of the archpastor, the clergy and all believers to widen the vineyard of God and plant its shoots anew where once God had it that it be destroyed by the diabolical flames of this century.

The cloister and its cathedral suffered not once from these flames and from fire in the direct sense of the word. The last fire that occurred in 1984 destroyed not only ancient cathedral frescoes but also the archives housed in the cathedral after the Revolution. All of us know that in the neighbouring town of Ivanovo where it has been for several years now that the archives are vacating the church already returned to the



*The Epiphany (Anastasyinsky) Monastery in Kostroma*

believers. There was no such problem in Kostroma—the church, or rather its charred frame with traces of unhurried state-organized restoration work, was returned early in 1990 without any particular delay. But it required from us a tremendous effort and means to conduct the first service on February 5, 1991. The precentor still complains that without iconostasis the cathedral is too hollow, bell-ringers still climb up to the bell-tower by an open staircase, worshippers still stumble over unevenly laid marble plates of the floor—and yet the temple is already alive and has lifted up to the sky its gilt cupolas—a symbol of ardent prayer.

This cloister, originally a monastery, was founded by monk Niki-

ta, a pupil of St. Sergy the Hegumen of Radonezh, in the 15th century. The present-day Epiphany Cathedral was built between 1559 and 1565, at the time of Hegumen Isaiah. In 1864-1869, an annex was put up around the cathedral, which considerably increased its capacity. It is the contrast between these two parts, entirely different in style, that characterizes the present-day appearance of the cathedral.

For the first time the cloister was destroyed by fire on September 6, 1847, when the only shrine saved was the Smolensk icon of the Mother of God. Sixteen years had passed before the monastery was regenerated—this time as a convent: sisters from the Anastasia Convent of the Exaltation of the





*Bishop Aleksandr of Kostroma and Galich carrying out the first service in the monastery, February 5, 1991*

"Our diocese, in general, experiences an acute shortage of premises. In addition to the monastic structures enumerated above, we have decisions adopted by the local authorities on the transfer to us of buildings to accommodate the Diocesan Administration where now the ruling bishop also resides, the diocesan school whose twenty pupils occupy a small room at the Resurrection Cathedral, and the Sunday catechetical school which is attended by over two hundred children and adults and which has no permanent quarters either. However, despite all these decisions, none of these buildings has been vacated as yet."

The diocesan school—the first religious educational establishment to be opened in Kostroma in the post-revolutionary decades—as well as the Sunday school for townspeople and the convent could promote the rebirth of the ancient Kostroma region—a part of the Holy Russ—still more effectively were they to work under more favourable external conditions. Let us hope that this time will come soon.

YEVGENY KOMAROV

Cross moved here with Hegumene Maria at their head. Nearly four hundred nuns and lay sisters lived in the convent at the beginning of the 20th century. And again it suffered from the flames, the flames of the social tempest.

In his sermon that followed the first Liturgy Vladyka Aleksandr recalled the tragic year of 1918 when Hegumene Susanna was summoned to the Revolutionary Tribunal. The sisters sheltered the Mother behind the monastery walls, but when the soldiers broke into the cloister after the siege they did not find the Hegumene there: she was secretly evacuated from the convent. She lived a long life and died in Grodno. The cloister was, naturally, closed down.

The third fire, that of 1984, as it was already said, turned out to be "purifying": the fire destroyed the archives and the church was soon returned to the parish. It cannot be said, however, that this put an end to all problems. In the first place, it is extremely difficult to collect money required for the restoration. Secondly, decisions adopted by the local authorities

to return to the cloister the former cells as well as a small Smolensk church have not been fulfilled so far, and twenty nuns are forced to live in the town flats for the time being. Absence of premises is the reason why the Diocesan Administration refuses to admit new sisters... Forty families still live in uncomfortable flats that were formerly cells, architectural workshops are still housed in the Smolensk church, while the most convenient refectory building is still occupied by picture gallery.



*The first Liturgy in the Epiphany Cathedral of the monastery  
Hegumen Lazar with children in the church*



# The Commission for the Canonization of Saints

In accordance with the decision of the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, which met on June 7-8, 1990, regarding the need to "take special care in the preparation of material for the canonization of martyrs who suffered for their faith during the years of persecution endured by the Church in the twentieth century", the Commission for the Canonization of Saints has continued its study of relevant details and has produced a document entitled "On the Church's Attitude to the Heroism of Martyrs". The work outlines the principles with which the Church down the ages has treated the glorification of martyrs, and also the paths that the Commission will follow in the future, with regard to the canonization of new martyrs. During its two most recent meetings, the Commission has been considering material for the canonization of Metropolitan Vladimir Bogoyavlensky of Kiev and Galicia and Metropolitan Veniamin Kazansky of Petrograd and Gdov in particular.

Metropolitan Vladimir (1848-1918) was shot without trial or investigation in the Kiev-Pechery Lavra on January 25, 1918. With regard to his death, the Local Council which was in session on that day in Moscow, passed a resolution that stated: "Throughout Russia an annual day of prayer is to be established on the 25th of January, or the Sunday thereafter, in memory of all those who died in this vicious year of the persecution of confessors and of martyrs." Metropolitan Vladimir's grave is to be found in the Church of the Exaltation of the Precious Cross by the nearer caves in the Kiev-Pechery Lavra.

Metropolitan Veniamin of Petrograd and Gdov (1874-1922) and Archimandrite Sergy, who suffered with him (also known as Vasily Pavlovich Shein; a member of the fourth State Duma, he joined the staff of the Secretariat of the Local Council, 1917-1918), Yuri Petrovich Novitsky (professor in the Department of Criminal Law at the Petrograd University), Ivan Mikhailovich Kovsharov (lawyer), were shot on August 13, 1922, on the orders of the Petrograd regional revolutionary tribunal. At their trial they were accused of "organizing counter-revolutionary activity and opposing the decree of February 23 on the confiscation of Church property."

Having studied the material relating to Metropolitan Veniamin and those who suffered with him, the Commission for the Canonization of Saints came to the conclusion that these people were innocent. The Church sent a request to the USSR Office of

Public Prosecutions that the issue of their rehabilitation be examined. In response to this request His Holiness, Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia received a document on February 11, 1991, signed by the senior assistant to the USSR General Public Prosecutor, V. Ilyukhin, which stated: "The study, undertaken by the USSR Office of Public Prosecutions, of the criminal archives has shown that the trial of V. Kazansky (Metropolitan Veniamin) and others (59 people in all) was unjustified. In the material relating to criminal activity there is no evidence which bears witness to the creation of anti-Soviet organizations or the carrying out of activity aimed at undermining the Soviet state. There are no grounds to deduce from Metropolitan Veniamin's letters to the Commission for Help for the Starving or from his letters to the Petrograd Regional Executive Committee, that he possessed a criminal character. In the Metropolitan's appeal to the Petrograd flock (April 10, 1922), priests and lay Christians were urged to make donations to help the starving and to help with the distribution of Church funds set aside for the aims of the Commission and to put an end to excess by freezing Church funds. In connection with the report of First Deputy to the General Public Prosecutor of the USSR, A. Vasiliev, a protest was delivered to the Presidium of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation to the effect that the criminal case against V. Kazansky (Metropolitan Veniamin) and the other 59 individuals should be revoked for lack of evidence. On October 31, 1990, the protest was upheld and all the aforementioned individuals are pronounced rehabilitated."

In response to a subsequent inquiry, His Holiness, Patriarch Aleksy II received on February 22, 1991 from the President of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, V. Lebedev, a resolution of the Presidium of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, taken on October 31, 1990, which noted the judicial decisions regarding Metropolitan Veniamin of Petrograd and Gdov and the others. "Their cases are closed, due to the absence of any activity punishable by criminal law. They are hereby pronounced rehabilitated." His Holiness passed the given documents to the Commission for the Canonization of Saints and gave permission for them to be published. At the present time all the material concerning the service and heroic acts of Metropolitan Vladimir, Metropolitan Veniamin and those who suffered with him, are being studied by the Commission and after their forthcoming meeting will be sent to the Holy Synod for consideration.



# The Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods

## An Interview With Hegumen Ioann, President of the Union

The Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods was formed on October 25, 1990, on the decision of the Holy Synod, with Hegumen Ioann Ekonomtsev as its President. At the time when he was Deputy Head of the Department for External Church Relations and since February 1, 1991, he is Head of the Department of the Moscow Patriarchate for Religious Education and Catechization. Fifteen brotherhoods, including the fraternities of St. Sergy, of the Protecting Veil of the Most Holy Mother of God, of St. Aleksy and others, took part in founding the Union. Our correspondent Vladimir Semenko put a few questions to Father Ioann.

Father Ioann, what is the purpose of Orthodox brotherhoods being formed now? Some people believe that there is no need for them, that a parish can cope with social service itself.

Social activity of the Church may be organized in various ways. As you probably know, a Russian Orthodox parish now often represents an amorphous mass of people who meet only during divine service and practically do not know each other. Whereas a brotherhood enables to invigorate parish life for it is a consolidated group of people united not only by their common participation in divine services, but also by their combined efforts in the sphere of mutual assistance, upbringing and religious education of children, charitable works, etc.

The main directions of our activity are charitable work and spiritual enlightenment. We cannot imagine fraternal activity outside a church or a parish, without a confessor's spiritual guidance, without taking part in common liturgical life. I must say that we have not invented brotherhoods, they began to emerge spontaneously from below, while the Supreme Authority of the Russian Orthodox Church noticed their appearance and supported them. Most probably, it is the instability of spiritual, political and economic situation in our society that induces Orthodox people to unite in brotherhoods.

First brotherhoods arose in the Ukraine in the 16th century under the conditions of struggle for the preservation of Orthodoxy. In modern times they began to spring up in Russia in the 1920s when the Holy Patriarch Tikhon called upon the Orthodox believers to unite so as to protect Orthodoxy. I think that we'll take up studying these periods.

Will you, please, speak about the plans of the Union of Brotherhoods in the field of charitable work and spiritual enlightenment?

First of all I would like to speak about the specific features of fraternal charity within the framework of the church structure. Until recently, as long as our Church did not escape from the political ghetto

in which She has been during the last seven decades, we could not engage in charitable activity. The very word "charity" was excluded from our vocabulary, while the charitable work of the Church was forbidden by law. In our days broad possibilities have opened before the Church. How can charitable activity be organized? On the one hand, it can be an initiative of individual people or of individual communities. On the other, charitable work can and must be organized within the framework of dioceses and the whole church structure. In this connection I must say that it was the experience gained by the Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods in the sphere of charitable work and spiritual enlightenment that clearly demonstrated the necessity of setting up two new departments of the Moscow Patriarchate—the Department for Religious Education and Catechization and the Department for Charitable Work and Social Service.

In the first place we shall render assistance to sick and needy people. Being aware of the fact that this is a sphere of action of state health-protection bodies we are ready to cooperate with the Ministry of Public Health. This readiness is reciprocal. In all probability we shall not be able to eliminate all defects inherent in the state-organized health-protection system. Our main purpose must be to place next to a doctor a clergyman who would bring the word of God to the sick, encourage in them hope and a desire to fight for their life. I believe that in this case our medical service will change for the better. We do our best to have churches and chapels built in hospitals, to prepare priests for working there. Such preparation is absolutely necessary because it is quite clear that not every clergyman can work with sick people, especially with those who are mortally ill.

The question is now being decided of the transfer under our jurisdiction of the republican clinic's ward for children with blood cancer. About 95 per cent of these children die whereas in the West 80 per cent of children with such diagnosis recuperate. You can imagine how responsible and difficult is the work with children who will die almost for sure. I consider it necessary to say that Father Aleksandr Men visited the children's ward till the end of his life. Members of our Union have already begun working in this ward. We have given material assistance as well: made arrangements with German hospitals about aid in medicines and medical equipment. A great contribution to this was made by Archbishop Longin of Düsseldorf. In future we are going to take under our guardianship the psychiatric ward of the hospital for adults. In addition to that we plan to open a house



for mothers and children attached to some maternity home so as to begin religious upbringing of children right from their birth. We want to make our hospitals model medical institutions where care for the corporeal health of a person would be inseparable from her or his spiritual enlightenment.

We have made arrangements about probationing our doctors in Germany. Not long ago the Union invited two professors from Australia to consult our doctors. In perspective, we strive after taking under our jurisdiction of hospitals where members of our brotherhoods work or will work, that is, after receiving the right to decide all personnel and economic problems. Foreign experience shows that only in this case can we count on positive results.

We are worried not so much about the professional level of doctors (we do have fairly good specialists) as about the level of the middle and junior medical personnel which is responsible for a timely aid to a patient and for an immaculate execution of doctors' prescriptions. For this reason we pay great attention to training hospital nurses. The first Orthodox medical school where not only medical but also religious disciplines are taught has been established under the auspices of our Union.

We demand from the doctors whom we invite not only high qualification but untarnished morality as well. When I started the work of selecting personnel for church hospitals I was amazed to learn how many doctors turned out to be Orthodox believers.

Work with alcoholics and drug addicts is another trend of our activity. We have already begun it. Then follows work with the aged and orphans. Homes for the aged and orphanages that we plan to open will not be large: they will accommodate 10-15, maximum 20 people and be served by individual brotherhoods. It is possible to speak of organizing common liturgical life for inmates of these homes and members of brotherhoods; this will help create a sort of family or church atmosphere. All this does not rule out our work in homes for the aged and orphanages supported by the state.

Still another direction of our activity is work with prisoners. You, of course, know about His Holiness the Patriarch's visit to a prison near Leningrad, know that the inmates of this prison expressed their desire to build a church with their own hands. The Patriarch proposed his help to them but they refused to take it saying they will build the church with their own money. I am convinced if people seek to build the church it means they have already found the road to salvation. We know of cases when many prisoners were baptized by priests of the St. Sergy Brotherhood which is a part of our Union.

We are, naturally, worried with a problem of refugees. But we have not embarked on this work yet because it requires considerable resources, still we think of this in principle. At the present time our Union takes an active part in distributing humanitarian aid from abroad. We also plan to arrange free canteens for the poor. To our deep regret, the request to assign

us premises for the purpose with which we approached the Moscow Administration of Public Catering was not granted. In the reply we received it was stated that there are 96 canteens in Moscow which engage in charitable activity and that there is no need to open new ones... To all appearances, people responsible for this question seek to lease premises on a commercial basis and receive high profits. They do not give a thought to the moral aspect of the matter. Now we are raising this question before the Moscow Soviet and hope for a positive decision.

Finally, our spiritual-educational activity. Teaching religious disciplines is now permitted by legislation, and for this reason Sunday schools spring up everywhere. Our task lies in rendering methodical assistance. This, of course, requires tremendous efforts and means because text-books must not only be compiled but published and distributed as well. The Radonezh Society (some of its members belong to our Union) has already instituted the Orthodox classical gymnasium. We are getting ready to open catechetical courses which will begin to work in the nearest future. We'll organize an enlarged seminar for teachers of religious disciplines. Our Union will sponsor the establishment not only of brotherhoods but also of trade unions such as associations of Orthodox teachers, physicians, psychologists and so forth. We also envisage creating an association of Orthodox Slavists, which could promote the study of the Cyril and Methodius legacy. The movement of the Orthodox youth that is being formed now actively cooperates with our Union.

**Father Ioann, would you say a few words about the financial basis of the Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods?**

People in our Union work in the time free from their basic occupation and receive no remuneration. At the present time the Union has no money to its credit. It is true that a Christian Charity Fund has been created and His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia gave his consent to become its chairman. I hope that some time will pass and we shall begin receiving donations. Contacts arranged with representatives of business circles testify that many of them would like to contribute to the solution of our tasks. For it is obvious that economic problems cannot be overcome without spiritual transformations, and these transformations, in their turn, cannot be effected without the assistance of the Church. We also get aid from non-Orthodox Churches and from some Western firms.

**What are the relations between local brotherhoods and diocesan bishops?**

To our deep regret, conflicting situations sometimes arise. The canonical structure of our Church is an episcopal structure. There is no Church in the absence of a bishop. As Archbishop Vasily Krivoshein († 1985) used to say the appearance of a bishop in an assembly of the believers makes it the assembly of a Local



Church. One may like it or not but this is so. And if we consider ourselves children of the Russian Orthodox Church we must recognize this principle. On the other hand, Orthodoxy is based on the principle of sobornost too. Unfortunately, the past decades witnessed a certain deformation and an adequate balance between episcopal authority and sobornost has not been found so far. This creates complications.

The activity of brotherhoods is developed most successfully in Moscow, which is attributed to the attention rendered to us by Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia, who is the ruling archpastor of Moscow.

The topic "Christianity and politics" is now heatedly discussed in society. What is your attitude to Christian political parties being created in Russia? How, in your opinion, should Christian political parties be appraised from the point of view of the Church?

I am firmly convinced that the Church must stay outside politics and fulfil her salvific mission befittingly. At the same time we are prepared to work in most close cooperation in the sphere of charity and spiritual enlightenment with all Orthodox Christians irrespective of their political views. We, unconditionally, oppose political extremism since extremism is at variance with Christian ideals.

Concerning our relations with Christian democrats I can tell you that Viktor Aksyuchits, one of the leaders of Russia's Christian Democratic Movement, approached us with a request to admit to our Union the brotherhood of which he is a member. In April 1990 I attended the First Congress of the RCDM in the capacity of a guest; so I do not see any obstacles to cooperation with the RCDM in the fields which unite us.

Father Ioann, we know that, apart from your work in the Patriarchate, you are engaged in theological and historical studies. Your articles appear in most diverse publications, including such journals as "Vybor" (Choice) and "Vestnik (Herald) of the Russian Christian Democrats" which, as we know, are not official publications of the Moscow Patriar-

chate. Quite recently this was out of the ordinary for a spiritual leader of your rank. Apparently, such openness is not something accidental; can it be explained by your principles?

I see no problem here. Two or three years ago your question might, perhaps, put me in a complicated position. But today I consider it necessary to emphasize specially that the time when we were in isolation or self-isolation has passed and, I hope, will never return.

Apparently, it is not only your personal position, is it?

Surely. Leaders of the Patriarchate occupy a fairly open position now. We abandon old stereotypes.

As is known, contemporary church situation in Russia is characterized by the existence of definite splits and disarrangements which at times grow deep. Do you think brotherhoods amalgamated in the Union can play a consolidating role and obstruct these splits?

I hope so. We must take into account real conditions under which our Church lives. It accomplishes her salvific mission on the sinful earth and, to our deep regret, the surrounding world exerts its influence on the Church. But I think that all maladies of society are imparted to the Church so as to be conquered within. This, however, requires great effort. I perceive our shortcomings just as clearly as representatives of, say, Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia and "catacomb" church. But, as distinct from the representatives of these Churches, I firmly believe that these shortcomings can and must be overcome only through systematic and persevering work. An endeavour to eliminate them at once go by means of destroying the already existing structures and setting up new ones in their place is a utopia. I would describe it as Bolshevism in the Church. We have had enough of destruction. It is necessary to draw new forces to the Church, and, above all, young people and intellectuals: the system of spiritual education must be reformed. Some time will elapse and we shall feel results of the work we have undertaken.



## Ivano-Frankovsk Diocese

As has been reported in the press, all functioning Orthodox churches in Ivano-Frankovsk have been forcibly seized by Catholics of the Eastern rite. On January 17, 1991, as a result of the talk between Archbishop Feodosy of Ivano-Frankovsk and Kolo-myja and representatives of the local government bodies, an agreement was reached concerning the transfer of the building of a former kindergarten to the community of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Vladyka Feodosy found this building sufficiently suitable for divine services (it can hold 150 to 200 people). It has been planned to lay the foundation stone for a new church for the Orthodox community and to allot a plot of land for it in one of the parks situated in the centre of Ivano-Frankovsk. The city authorities have reaffirmed their readiness also to transfer the building of the present archives to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Vladyka Feodosy believes that the agreements reached are a positive move in settling the problem of providing the Orthodox with prayer houses, but a great deal of effort is still required to enable Orthodox believers to fully satisfy their spiritual requirements.

V. Golod, Deputy Chairman of the Ivano-Frankovsk City Soviet, regards the understanding reached as merely the first, not yet sufficient, step towards creating adequate conditions for the activity of the Orthodox Community in Ivano-Frankovsk.

The fate of the building of the former Arts Museum is still to be decided. For a number of months the city authorities have been promising to turn this building (or part of it) over to the Orthodox community, but the building is currently under repair and the decision on its transfer to one or another religious community has been postponed. The Roman Catholics of Ivano-Frankovsk also lay claim to the museum building. As priest Galimurki, who heads the Roman Catholic community, says, till 1960 this building was a functioning Catholic church, which was later closed down and turned into a museum. For Catholic Poles this church, being the oldest in the city, is a national shrine.

Fr. Kazimierz pointed out that the secular authorities and the Polish Catholic hierarchs are interested in the transfer of the above-said building to the Polish community of the city, which, according to him, numbers from 700 to 800 worshippers.

## Kursk Diocese

On February 12, 1991, residents of workers' township Cheremisinovo, Kursk Region, came, in a solemn procession, to the field which has been allotted to them for the construction of a new church. The ceremony of placing this plot of land at the disposal of worshippers was attended by Hegumen Zinovy, Superintendent Dean of the Kastornoye Deanery, representatives of the local authorities, district architect, and other officials.

Hegumen Zinovy congratulated members of the newly-formed community and wished them that the church might be built successfully and without delay. Representatives of the local authorities promised their assistance in its construction.

N. GRACHEVA

## Pskov Diocese

With the blessing of Archbishop Vladimir of Pskov and Velikie Luki, on October 9, 1990, the Feast of the Apostle and Evangelist, St. John the Divine, a Sunday school was opened at the Velikie Luki Church of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God. This venture was initiated by Hegumen Sturov, Superintendent Dean of the Velikie Luki Deanery.

More than 50 pupils of various age entered the school. It could not admit all those who wished to attend it, due to the premises being too small. A moleben before the commencement of the academic year was conducted on the first day of studies. Hegumen Sergy addressed the pupils with an edification. "We live in the world created by God and therefore should study sciences about God in order to understand God and His world," he said. "You will study the history of the Old and New Testaments, but,

what is no less important, our school will teach you to do good and love your neighbour, to be tolerant and merciful."

On Christmas, the children were invited to a Christmas-tree party. Very memorable for them was the revived pilgrimage tradition. With the blessing of Archbishop Vladimir, the Sunday-school pupils, together with Father Sergy, made a bus trip to the ancient Russian shrines of the Pskov-Pechery Monastery. In the cloister the children were shown much attention; they were taken to the famous caves and told about the spiritual significance of the great Russian shrine. In Pskov the children visited the local cathedral and the kremlin.

Before their departure to Velikie Luki, with the blessing of Archbishop Vladimir, the children were congratulated by S. Kuksevich, Secretary of the Diocesan Administration, who presented souvenirs and conveyed archpastoral blessing to them.

L. EKIMOVA

## Saratov Diocese

On November 13-20, 1990, a delegation of clerics of the Saratov Diocese visited Coventry on the invitation of the Anglican Bishop Simon of Coventry and the Department for External Church Relations of the Anglican Church. In those days Britain observed the 50th anniversary of Coventry's destruction by the Nazi aircraft in November 1940. Coventry and Volgograd being twin-cities, the Anglican side was willing to see a delegation of clergymen from Volgograd.

Our delegation consisted of Archbishop Pimen of Saratov and Volgograd (from January 31, 1991 of Volsk), protodeacon Lazar Novokreshchennykh, and deacon Mikhail Belikov. The solemn ceremony held in the Coventry cathedral, was attended by some 1,500 people: bishops, priests, city mayors, theologians, diplomats, and high-ranking representatives of the Anglican Church. Among the guests of honour were Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain with her husband, Duke Philip of Edinburgh, President of the FRG Richard von Weizsacker, Dr. Kruse, Bishop of the Evangelical



Church in Germany, and others. When the mass was over and Queen Elizabeth concluded her speech, Archbishop Pimen, Bishop Simon and Bishop Kruse took the icon of the so-called Madonna of Stalingrad from the synthronon and carried it into a special side-chapel, after which Archbishop Pimen consecrated it according to the Orthodox rite. From

now on the icon will be in this side-chapel.

Participants in the solemnities made their entries in the Distinguished Visitors' Book after which Archbishop Pimen had a talk with Queen Elizabeth and President Richard von Weizsacker. Thereupon Bishop Simon arranged a reception in the town hall.

The other days of the program-

me were devoted to acquaintance with historical and architectural monuments and sights of Coventry, Kenilworth, Leamington and other towns.

On November 19, a supper was given in Bishop Simon's Residence in honour of the Russian Orthodox delegation.

*Protodeacon*

LAZAR NOVOKRESHCHENNYKH

## IN MEMORIAM

### Archbishop VARLAAM of Dnepropetrovsk and Zaporozhye

On September 17, 1990, Archbishop Varlaam of Dnepropetrovsk and Zaporozhye died in Kiev after a short illness.

Archbishop Varlaam (secular name Aleksei Timofeyevich Ilyushchenko) was born into a pious peasant family in the village of Pruska, Klimovo District, Bryansk Region, on May 13, 1929. After finishing secondary school he worked first in his native village and then took part in the restoration of Donbass mines destroyed during the war. A very religious person, he attended divine services and performed the duties of a reader, sexton, chorister and hypodeacon.

In 1949 he entered the Kiev Theological Seminary which he graduated from in 1953. On August 19, 1954, he was ordained deacon and a month later—presbyter by Metropolitan Ioann Sokolov († 1968) of Kiev and Galicia. In 1968 he was raised to the dignity of archpriest and appointed rector of the Church of the Ascension in Dimeyevka, Kiev. In 1969 he became Chancellor of the Ukrainian Exarchate and Superintendent Dean of the Kiev Parishes.

On June 5, 1970, he was professed by Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev and Galicia (now of Kiev and All the Ukraine) with the name of Varlaam; on June 14 of the same year he was raised to the dignity of archimandrite and later in the year entered the Moscow Theological Academy. In February 1972 he was



appointed dean of the St. Vladimir Cathedral in Kiev.

On October 22, 1972, Archimandrite Varlaam was consecrated Bishop of Pereyaslav-Khmelnytsky by Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev and Galicia, Archbishops Pallady Kaminsky († 1978) of Zhitomir and Ovruch and Iosif Savrash († 1984) of Ivano-Frankovsk and Kolomyja, and Bishops Feodosy of Poltava and Kremenchug (now Archbishop of Omsk and Tara) and Savva of Chernovitsy and Buko-

vina (now Archbishop of Poltava and Kremenchug). He was appointed Vicar of the Kiev Diocese.

From April 18 to May 31, 1973, Vladyka Varlaam was administrator *ad interim* of the Chernigov and Sumy dioceses. On March 18, 1977, he was appointed Bishop of Chernovtsy and Bukovina. On December 30, 1986, he became Bishop of Volhynia and Rovno. On September 2, 1987, was elevated to the dignity of archbishop. On February 19, 1990, he became Bishop of Simferopol and the Crimea, Administrator *ad interim* of the Dnepropetrovsk Diocese, and on July 20 of the same year—Bishop of Dnepropetrovsk and Zaporozhye.

In every diocese Vladyka Varlaam left behind good memories of himself for his tireless concern for the flock, his striving to adorn the churches of God and for his kindness, simplicity and accessibility.

For his tireless labours for the Church of God he was decorated with the Order of the Orthodox Prince St. Vladimir, Equal to the Apostles (2nd Class) and the Order of St. Sergy of Radonezh (2nd Class).

On September 20, 1990, the funeral service for the departed archpastor was conducted in the Protecting Veil Convent (Kiev) by Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev and All the Ukraine, Archbishop Makary of Klin, Bishops Nifont of Khmelnytsky and Kamenets-Podolsky, Varfolomei of Volhynia and Lutsk. In his fune-



ral oration Vladyka Filaret gave a high appraisal of Archbishop Varlaam's prayerful feat and administrative abilities.

On the night of September 20, the Dnepropetrovsk-Zaporozhye flock, holding burning candles in their hands, met the coffin with the body with their deceased archpastor which arrived from Kiev. On the Feast of the Nativity of the Mother

of God, after the later Liturgy celebrated in the Holy Trinity Cathedral of Dnepropetrovsk, Metropolitan Nikodim of Kharkov and Bogodukhov, Archbishop Makary of Klin and Bishop Varfolomei of Volhynia and Lutsk conducted a parastasis. The coffin with the body of the departed Vladyka was carried around the Holy Trinity Cathedral and then lowered into a grave within the

church fence, next to the grave of Archbishop Andrei Komarov (†1955), the former archpastor of Dnepropetrovsk and Zaporozhye.

The term during which Vladyka Varlaam headed the Dnepropetrovsk Diocese was short, but he left a deep imprint in the hearts of clerics and laymen.

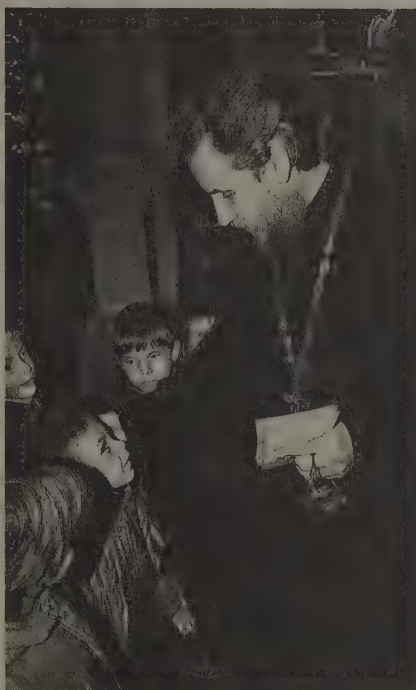
Archpriest ANATOLY RAFALSKY

## Hegumen LAZAR

On December 26, 1990, cleric of the Moscow Diocese, Hegumen Lazar (secular name Vyacheslav Solnyshko), Head of the Chancellery of the Diocesan Administration, rector of the metropolitan domestic chapel in the Novodevichy Convent, was murdered in his Moscow flat.

In the morning of that day he was a concelebrant of His Eminence Metropolitan Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna, who celebrated Divine Liturgy on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his archpastoral ministry.

On April 6, 1985, St. Lazarus' Saturday, Metropolitan Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna professed him with the name of Lazar in honour of St. Lazarus of Four Days in the Domestic Chapel of the Transfiguration of the Lord in the Novodevichy Convent, and on April 7, 1985, Palm Sunday, during Divine Liturgy celebrated in the Dormition Church of the Novodevichy Convent, the same hierarch ordained him priest; on that day he embarked on the path of a zealous service of the Church of Christ as a monk priest. During the few years of his pastoral ministry, which he spent among invalids and the aged, while performing his direct duties in the Diocesan Administration, he repeatedly won high primatial appraisal from His Holiness the late Patriarch Pimen. In 1988 he was awarded a pectoral cross and in 1990 was honoured with the dignity of hegumen. He was elevated to this dignity on April 7, 1990, the Feast of the



Annunciation, by His Beatitude Metropolitan Theodosius, the Primate of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church in America, during Divine Liturgy celebrated in the smaller cathedral of the Monastery of the Don Icon of the Mother of God.

On December 28, a parastasis was conducted at the coffin with the body of Hegumen Lazar in the Dormition Church of the Novodevichy Convent, during which Metropolitan Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna

and Bishop Grigory of Mozhaisk were praying. After the parastasis Metropolitan Yuvenaly conducted a litiya for the departed and began the reading of the Holy Gospel, which was continued by Bishop Grigory and clerics of the Dormition Church.

On the following day, December 29, Saturday, Metropolitan Yuvenaly, assisted by Bishop Grigory, Protopresbyter Maftei Stadnyuk, clergymen of the Dormition and other churches of Moscow, celebrated Divine Liturgy and conducted a funeral service for the departed according to the monastic order.

His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II sent his primatial message of condolences to His Eminence Metropolitan Yuvenaly, which was permeated with profound, deep-felt thoughts. Acting on his behalf, His Grace Bishop Arseny of Istra honoured the divine service in the Dormition Church and the burial service with his archpastoral presence and prayerfully participated in it, laying the flowers, sent by His Holiness the Patriarch, with the mourning ribbon inscribed: "To the diligent labourer in the vineyard of Christ. Patriarch Aleksy II."

With the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II, Hegumen Lazar was buried within the fence of the Transfiguration Church in the Patriarchal residence in Peredelkino outside Moscow.

Memory Eternal to the murdered hieromonk Lazar, and may the Lord give his soul rest with saints in the Heavenly Kingdom.



## On the Sin of Division and Schisms The Feast of St. John the Divine, Apostle and Evangelist

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit! The Holy Orthodox Church carefully and with great love preserves the memory of those whose names shine like guiding stars over the Church's horizon. And thus today the Holy Church honours the memory of the Apostle of love and friend of Jesus, the holy Evangelist, St. John the Divine. But each Christian feast is more than just the remembrance of a certain holy event or saint of God, it is also a remarkable lesson for our edification. The Apostle of Christ whom we lovingly honour today edifies us not only by the heroism and holiness of his life, but also by his epistles, which became books of Holy Scripture. Let us turn to them and draw out that which is useful to us today.

*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world*, we read in the First Epistle General of St. John (2.15). But what does the Apostle mean by *the world*? Here it is to be understood as the totality of all the negative phenomena which characterize the life of humankind, separated from God. The world also implies a human society, living not according to the laws of God, not according to the Gospel, but according to the elements of man's fallen nature. The world (in this sense of the word) has its origins in the Fall of our primogenitors and stands in absolute opposition to the Kingdom of God, for at its head is the fallen angel, the prince of darkness. *The whole world lieth in wickedness* (5.19) we read further in the Apostle's epistle. And one of the most characteristic manifestations of evil in the contemporary world is the vice of division, leading to enmity, hatred and mutual destruction. This plague gnaws away at the family, at society and at whole nations. The evil multiplies and widens to such an extent that the prophetic words of Christ the Saviour are fulfilled before our very eyes: *Nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom* (Mt. 24.7).

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, introduced a completely new principle of existence. He came to bring peace, to unite sinful people with God and with each other. *That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us* (Jn. 17.21) — thus prayed our Saviour before He suffered on the cross, reconciling man with God.

Christ's Church is the true embodiment of the idea of the unity between man and God. The whole Church is a single body, a single spiritual organism with one head — Our Lord Jesus Christ. The unity of all its members in the spirit of true faith and love is one of the most essential signs of the Church.

The world, lying in evil, has always fought against the Church of Christ and in various different ways and under various different pretexts has persecuted her faithful children. And even today, when favourable conditions for the external activity of the Church have been laid, it has not abandoned its insidious schemes. One of the contemporary weapons in the battle against the Church is the dissemination of ideas undermining people's trust in the Church and destroying the bonds of unity between its members. The discrepancies between the lives of Church members and the high ideals of Christianity are discussed, various dissonances within the Church are spoken of. In addition to these discussions the theme of the so-called independent church organizations invariably arises. These are Orthodox associations and groups of differing persuasions bearing no relation whatsoever to the Russian Orthodox Church.

All these phenomena bear witness to the lack of understanding of the fundamentals of the life of the Church as a body of spiritual grace. The Church is not only the visible community of bishops, priests and laity, it is not only temples and solemn services. Above all, the Church is the Body of Christ and Christ is the Head of the Church. "Where the Church is, there also is the Spirit of God, and where the Spirit is, there also is the Church and an abundance of grace," teaches the prelate Irenaeus of Lyons. And Metropolitan Filaret of Moscow speaks thus of the mystery of Christ's Church: "Within this visible form, that is the visible Church is the invisible Body of Christ, that is the invisible Church, a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing (Eph. 5.27)." With regard to the inadequacies of and dissonances within Church society it should be noted that these phenomena in no way harm the divine order of the Church itself, for they represent the personal sins of individual Christians whose standard of behaviour falls short



of that which is expected of them. As Metropolitan Filaret again says: "Not everyone who is considered a member of the visible Church is saved but only the one who belongs to the substance of the Body of Christ known only to Him who is its Head." Thus, every unworthy member of the Church who leads an immoral life deprives himself of the sanctifying communion with the Body of Christ and consequently of Eternal Life.

Our Creed says: "I believe in one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church." The Church of Christ is one because it is a single spiritual body with Christ as her Head. The Church is holy because she was founded and sanctified by Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, by His Passion and by the holy sacraments established by Him. The Church is termed Apostolic because she has perpetually and devotedly preserved apostolic teaching and the succession of the gifts of the Holy Spirit by the laying-on of hands at ordination. The Russian Orthodox Church retains every necessary prerequisite for piety and Eternal Life. The spiritual grace-filled treasures given by God to Russian Orthodoxy have been preserved by the feat of past generations of Orthodox Christians, by their prayers, by their confession of faith and by their martyrdom for that faith. And hence, Christ is found in the Russian Church, and we can attain to life in Christ and our Church remains as it was before and ever shall be the source of spiritual life, holiness and purity, the source of moral light and grace-imparting warmth, the bearer of the Kingdom of God on earth.

Russian Orthodox believers in our day and age must maintain a particular spiritual vigilance. Bishop Cyprian of Carthage teaches that the enemy of the human race devised heresies and schisms to destroy faith and distort the truth. The weapons of this spirit of evil are people, the violators of peace and concord who thus place themselves in opposition to Christ. As regards the various Orthodox associations, organized for laudable purposes but without the blessing of Holy Mother Church, it has to be said that they will not bear good fruit. Christ said: *Without me ye can do nothing* (Jn. 15.5). The Christian cannot perform good, saving works without the help of God, the grace which is abundantly poured out only in the Church of Christ. Those who are estranged from the Church are deprived of grace. And just as a plant withers and dries up without water, so man, deprived of the grace of the Holy Spirit, spiritually dies. "It is clear that those who do not belong to the Church are considered dead," explains Cyprian of Carthage, "and that he who has no life in him cannot bring life to others; the Church alone, having received the grace of Eternal Life, both lives for ever and brings life to the people of God."

We have thus far considered certain problems pertaining to ecclesiastical schisma. However, the vice of division as is well known can occur in all

spheres of our society and results in disasters on a national scale. How should we, as Orthodox Christians, combat this evil? Firstly, as the Apostle commanded, no one should busy himself with his own needs but each should have regard for the needs of his neighbour. And we, as members of Christ's Church, should show especial neighbourly love to each other. We need to foster a relationship between ourselves, such as the members of one and the same body have among each other, for we have one God and Father and one native land in Heaven. Agreement and like-mindedness are extremely useful in cases of worldly, temporal needs as well as for loftier concerns. As Bishop John Chrysostom says, if ten people think alike, each of them is subsequently no longer one but ten times greater. If an enemy were to attack one of them he would not stand alone but the other nine would help repel the attack, if one fell on hard times the other nine would cover his losses. How should the Christian in general react to any person he might meet in the course of his life? Again let us turn to St. John Chrysostom for our answer: "Let nobody say: such people cannot be my friends, my relatives, my neighbours," the prelate teaches. "Even if they are not your relatives or your friends they are still human beings, of the very same nature as yourself: they have the same Lord, they are your co-servants, your cohabitants, since you and they both share the same world... God gave us one common home — this world: He lit one sun for all, stretched out one canopy to cover all, that is the heaven, and laid one table for all, that is the earth."

However, there are of course occasions when division cannot be considered evil and agreement and like-mindedness cannot be considered good. A Christian cannot concur with one who creates lawlessness and preaches evil. Christ referred to this when He said: *Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee* (Mt. 18.8). If we cut off the damaged and incurable parts of our body, is it not all the more appropriate that we should distance ourselves from those, contact with whom does not lead to good, but, on the contrary, is damaging for our souls.

As far as Church unity is concerned, let us always keep in mind the commandment of Apostle Paul: *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them*" (Rom. 16.17). Amen.

Hegumen FEODOSY, teacher at the Moscow Theological Seminary



# Travellers on the Road of Damascus

## King Agrippa (Acts 26.1-32)

*Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself* (Acts 26.1). As a minister of God (Rom. 13.4), Agrippa by the authority given him from above opens the mouth to which billions of people and all nations will be insatiably listening for centuries. Does the apostle actually speak *for himself*? Certainly, he speaks not for himself, but for the Lord. We can see how indeed *for himself* the apostle speaks! If only all people would speak thus for themselves. We hear an ardent speech of a God-loving man, a speech filled with warmth and lively intonations... And then the apostle suddenly interrupts it with a question addressed to Agrippa: *King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?* And immediately adds: *I know that thou believest.* He adds this because *charity ... believeth all things, hopeth all things* (1 Cor. 13.4, 7)... It is evident that the apostle already loves Agrippa in Christ and is eager to transmute into him his joy, his faith and his knowledge of the Truth.

But Agrippa is locked into his eminence, into his public prestige. *Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian*, he answers to Paul. And the apostle's answering, final word before the trial shows how the apostle spoke for himself: *I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were such as I am*, and adds, *except these bonds.* *All that hear me this day...* How many there turned to be of those who heard the apostle's word among all the

peoples of the world... Throughout history, an innumerable multitude of people have become precisely such as the apostle, in Christ's faith. The prayer of him who spoke his words not for himself, but for Christ has been fulfilled.

Now what about King Agrippa? Did he hear anything? This we do not know. One thing is beyond doubt — that his heart and the heart of his wife, Bernice, were softened to some degree. If a heart does not grow hard in response to holy words, this means that it softens. Holy words never have a neutral effect.

*And when they* (the king, the governor, and Bernice) *were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds. Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty* (Acts 26.31-32).

Wasn't this word of Agrippa's at the moment equal on God's scales to professing the Christian faith?

## Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band (Acts 27)

*And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band ... And the next day we touched at Sidon. And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself...* Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them, and said unto them, *Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the*

*lading and ship, but also of our lives. Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul... They sailed close by Crete. But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon. And when the ship was caught and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive... And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship; and the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship. And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was taken away... Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, *Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must cast upon a certain island. But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country... And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, *Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. Then the***

Concluded. For the beginning see JMP, Nos. 10, 12, 1989; Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 1990; nos. 1, 2, 1991.



soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off... And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore...they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves. And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape. But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land: And the rest, come on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.

Julius was the apostle's guardian and guide on his way to Rome. Himself an instrument of God's Providence, he had tried, like many souls in this world, to obstruct Providence in his day-to-day life. Had he heeded the apostle, he would not have exposed to danger all those on board that ship. But Paul's presence saved him and all others from drowning. Once again, the captive saved the captor. An angel, appearing to Paul at night, had told him: *God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.* The centurion was thus "given" to the apostle from on high for the second time.

God "gives" a Christian all human beings he encounters. All those whom we meet and communicate with, who are entrusted to us and to whom we are entrusted, are "given" to us by God, so that we, *having nothing and yet possessing all things* (2 Cor. 6.10), might serve them and save them.

The closer we are to God the more people are entrusted, "given" to us. To the apostle, the whole ship was given, i.e., all the believers of the Church... The souls of all his 276 fellow voyagers on board that Alexandrian ship were given to

him. Each of them received a grain of God's truth according to his worth, and many were saved thanks to the apostle's proximity—perhaps not only physically.

Julius' humane treatment of Paul shows that the centurion's heart had already been softened towards the apostle. Of course, *the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul*, who knew the mysteries of the Divine Master of life. Julius did not know this Master, and therefore had to suffer many hardships on his way.

Through Julius the centurion, God's hand kept the soldiers, frightened by the shipwreck, from spilling the blood of Paul and the other prisoners. God's hour has not yet come for them. Once again Julius, *willing to save Paul*, acts as his guardian angel, an assistant to God's Angel who visited Paul at night, saying: *Fear not, Paul; Thou must be brought before Caesar.*

#### The Islanders (Acts 18.1-6)

It is of little interest trying to establish what tribe inhabited the island of Melita (Malta) when Apostle Paul and his companions were driven ashore there after the shipwreck. What is worthy of note is the islanders' religiosity. According to St. Luke, it was displayed in a dual way. Firstly, the barbarous people showed the strangered voyagers *no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold.*

The incident with the viper at the fire (3-6) brought out another aspect of these *barbarians'* religiosity. Seeing the snake hung on the apostle's hand, they said among themselves, *No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he*

*hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live...* What a clear understanding of Divine Justice. In their child-like faith in the nearness and reality of God's Judgment over man, whatever the circumstances of his earthly life, these primitive people are closer to God than many adepts of modern, abstract Christianity, which relegates God's power from earth to heaven, leaving to the former only the laws of Nature or man's solitary selfness.

#### Publius (Acts 28.7-10)

The chief man of the island of Malta received the shipwrecked travellers and *lodged them three days courteously.* Of course, he had no inkling of who was among the obscure and least honoured men in this company. But soon some of the apostle's power was revealed to him through the healing of his father, who was suffering from fever and a bloody flux. Paul entered to him, *and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him.* How easily he did it! *Veni, vidi, vici*—the grand simplicity of Caesar. He came, he saw, he cured—and did not say a word about it. He did it "in passing", and then stepped back into the crowd and probably forgot what he had done. Such was the character and style of the people of the new world, the New Covenant with God. The islanders naturally took advantage of the awesome criminal's and miracle-worker's stay with them, this stranger who was kept separated from the people by the guards and yet cured their diseases and ailments. Every sick person in the island who came to the apostle was healed in these months. The apostle's reward was honours and such things as were necessary. No doubt, the grateful Publius also offered his gifts.



But, in performing these cures the apostle pursued no interest, either material or spiritual. He did not even expect the healed to embrace Christianity. He healed solely with the power of his compassionate love, regardless of his preaching. But via the apostle, this power, the power of the non-human Truth, of Divine living, irresistibly attracted people to Christ. This sun, rising *on the evil and on the good* (Mt. 5.45), could only be the true sun.

### The Puteoli Brethren (Acts 28.13-14)

Of these we only know that they persuaded the apostles Paul and Luke—and in their persons, as it were, the Lord Himself—to stay with them seven days. These brothers were the direct opposite of the Gadarenes, who had *besought the Lord to depart out of their coasts* (Mt. 8.34).

In both cases God's will obeyed people's will. The Lord is fond of doing people's will, He loves its freedom and does what it desires. This is why the heaven of life and the abyss of death are equally open to human hearts.

### The Guarding Soldier (Acts 28.16,30-31)

*In Rome Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him (28.16). Was suffered by whom? By unknown officials of the Roman judiciary of whom history has no further recollection. But it was through them that God's will concerning both Paul and Rome was done. And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.* How many beneficent, God-inspired words must the soldier that kept him have heard. This soldier was a chosen instrument of Providence. Maybe no one in the world ever imbibed this wealth of apostolic preaching.

What became of that soldier? How did his human will respond to the flow of grace pouring forth day and night from the mouth of the great apostle? Did he become a son and preacher of the Truth? Or did the heavenly wisdom that brings Eternal Life to the world leave him untouched? What was his

spiritual life like during these two years of constant proximity to the apostle? This is concealed from us. But he did not interfere with the apostle's work. Paul was able to preach the Good Message of Christ the Lord, no man forbidding him. The soldier probably became very close to him. And, of course, he loyally protected the apostle from fresh attempts on his life by any foes of the true "hope of Israel". We have good cause to assert this. Certainly it was not the Roman authorities but the heavenly powers that attached this solitary soldier to the apostle of peace, so that he might, after his extended travels, stay at one place. This pitiful human surveillance, this absurd liability to human tribunals helped the apostle to come to Rome, stay on there and establish the Roman Church.

In effect, Paul, the prisoner-apostle, was Rome's first bishop, the historical prototype of a true pastor who derives his authority not from external prestige or the power of the state but from God's truth and its humble acceptance of suffering in this world.

Archbishop IOANN SHAKHOVSKOY  
(† 1989)



# FOR PEACE AND THE SURVIVAL OF HUMANITY

## Metropolitan KIRILL of Smolensk and Kaliningrad Ecology for the Soul

(A report given at the European Ecumenical Assembly  
"Peace and Justice", Basel, 15-21 May, 1989.)

1) The fundamental crises which today affect humanity as a whole are all connected to a greater or lesser extent with the past and present-day situation in Europe. This, of course, goes without saying. Therefore, one of the tasks of the process of justice, peace and the integrity of creation in Europe must be the search for those profound reasons which provoked or directly engendered the developments, which have become the crises of contemporary civilization. Obviously, the Church's response must be of a pastoral nature and be based on a clear historical and theological analysis of the situation. It should be addressed primarily to Christians, but not only to them. It will be impossible to halt the fatal course of events without a combined effort by peoples of different faiths and ideologies. The ever-growing desire of non-believers to hear the voice of the Church and to be made aware of the Christian assessment of events is one of the most evident signs of our times.

2) Therefore, the pastoral response of the Church to the problems of justice, peace and the integrity of creation should be made in a language comprehensible to non-Christians too. Moreover, it must be an essentially Christian response, for it is precisely this sort of answer that people are expecting from the Church today. This raises an important question: exactly what form of language should we employ, so that, on the one hand, it may not dilute or pervert the truth whilst, on the other hand, being comprehensible and accessible to those of other convictions?

3) Contemporary man's most tragic error is the establishment of a hierarchy of values based on personal benefit, which inevitably implies indifference to the truth. Many people have just ceased to understand what they are living for and do not have time to ponder the meaning of life.

People's lives are dedicated to the acquisition of things, which are actually means but are identified as goals and become an end in themselves. This astonishing

substitution of ends by means has also occurred in Christian circles. Naturally, Christians do not in theory reject the aims set forth in the Gospel but in practice they are inclined to confuse ends with means. In this context, I would like to ask a fundamental question: justice, peace and the integrity of creation—means or ends? Do we live for the sake of justice, peace and the integrity of creation or are these concepts the indispensable conditions for the attainment of the ultimate aims of existence? Everything else will depend on the answers we give to these questions: the assessment of our problems, the means we employ to solve them, the future of the world and of our very selves.

I would like to express, if I may, a profound conviction. Justice, peace and the integrity of creation are essentially means, not ends, for the final end is that of which St. Paul the Apostle spoke: *Then cometh the end, when we shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father...that God may be all in all* (1 Cor. 15.24,28). This text is the basis of our conviction that eternal life in God, the transfigured universe, is the ultimate goal to which all other goals must be subjugated and to which all our ultimate hopes must refer. It is in this goal that we find the meaning of our faith: *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable* (1 Cor. 15.19). Of course, other temporary goals exist alongside the ultimate goal. Their value, from the point of view elaborated above, is determined by the extent to which they correspond or do not correspond to the achievement of the ultimate goal, by the extent to which they facilitate the latter, to which they represent the means for its achievement. It is clear enough that the substitution of ends by means is a definite process which, it seems to me, is directly related to the crises undermining human society. Any attempt to rationalize, let alone overcome these crises must occur within a context that recognizes the supremacy of the ultimate goals and the priority of absolute values. This will effect the disclosure and accurate analysis of those profound reasons which have conditioned the accumulation of contemporary crises, and will afford an integral overview and objective interpretation of the realities of the



world around us. Perhaps this approach will enable us to resist the temptation to occupy ourselves with individual, topical problems, blatantly disregarding the basic questions of our very existence. Don't you think this temptation occurs not infrequently in the ecumenical movement and in the theology of certain Churches? Thus the question arises: can Christians reach a consensus on the problems of justice, peace and the integrity of creation without overcoming this temptation?

4) Much is said nowadays about the crises and global problems afflicting the world. In spite of the many differences between them, the curses of contemporary humanity all have one feature in common: they are the marks of death, the heralds and precursors of the demise of human civilization. In this sense they all throw a challenge to the integrity of creation, to life on our planet. In various parts of the world different crises take on different proportions: some of them are more acute in one region than in another. But it does not imply any lessening of the burden borne by the whole planet: there is no safe harbour in this world where we can save ourselves and wait out the storm. Europe bears particular responsibility for many of these crises. The ideological confrontation here of two socio-economic systems conditions the arms race, the threat of mass destruction, nourishes the arms-trade and exacerbates local conflicts elsewhere in the world. Europe has played a particularly harmful role in the destruction of the environment, which continues unabated, more critical than ever before. Air, soil, water, flora, fauna, the ozone layer, mineral resources, ultimately the climate itself—all are sustaining damage effected by industrial activity, geared towards immediate economic interests, the increase of the gross national product and the extraction of maximum possible profits. Hence, environmental issues are perceived by policy-makers as spokes in the wheel of effective development.<sup>1</sup> Scientific experimentation in the area of genetic engineering, connected with the formation and transmutation of genetic characteristics, is a cause for grave misgivings, as is the spread of AIDS; industrial catastrophes and so on. To this sorry picture can be added the unequal distribution of welfare and power, unemployment, the violation of human rights and religious freedoms, racism, sexism, threats to the moral integrity of the human personality and to the integrity of the family, alcoholism, prostitution, drug addiction and crime. Anxiety, uncertainty, cynicism and stress loom large in the lives of many people. The destruction of cultural heritage and traditions and the predominance of a uniform, mass culture have assumed menacing proportions. Europe has managed successfully to export many of these problems to the Third World, at the same time making its negative contribution to global economic relations, aggravating the problems of both rich and poor countries alike. This is the sin of the whole continent of Europe, from the Atlantic to the Urals. In some respects the East is more guilty, in others the West, but at the end of the day it is a

common sin. The confession of these common sins implies the recognition of common responsibility and is in itself a real step forward towards joint action. Historical truth bears witness to the fact that the Christian Churches have been among the first to raise the alarm. In the 1960s concern about the development of a scientific-technical civilization was added to a preoccupation with questions of peace and justice, which was the stuff of the post-war activity of the World Council of Churches and is witnessed to by the foundation of the European Conference of Churches and the Christian Peace Conference. In society and policy-making circles at that time there was in practice no criticism of the rapid rate of economic growth. Yet it was then that theologians began to ask questions about the environment, science and technology and the effect of technological society on human dignity (New Delhi, 1961). The World Conference "Church and Society" (1966) considered the Christian response to the socio-technological revolution and similar issues were discussed in Uppsala (1968). The 1972 Stockholm conference on environmental problems concurred with the growing anxiety about ecological questions within the Church. It is hard for me to judge to what extent this anxiety has been absorbed by the international community in the West.

For decades the East has been joyfully optimistic, believing in the saving power of science and technology and associating gloomy predictions for the future exclusively with the "inevitable death of the bourgeoisie". The exultation and victory of the proletariat, on the other hand, implied a future, practically devoid of serious conflict and guaranteeing prosperity, a high level of consumption and unlimited resources. The emphasis was placed on quantitative growth indices and on the need to "catch up with and overtake America". The increase of gross national product was the basic economic task. Discussions about the limitation of growth were considered to be bourgeois flights of fancy, means of ideological struggle against the progressive part of humanity.

5) The 1917 Revolution declared its intention to create a new society in the name of mankind. The irrefutable rectitude of this aim was contained in the conviction that the human person, and particularly that of the worker and the peasant, must be transformed from an object, a thing that can be legally exploited, into a subject with his own inherent rights. But the fateful course of events whose meaning is yet to be understood, led to the situation, whereby the pathos of the building of the future eclipsed the present, collective rights and the striving for equality eclipsed the rights and freedoms of the individual. The present came to be understood as a means for the attainment of the future, for the achievement of happiness of future generations. It was not only the personal rights and freedoms of those alive today that were sacrificed in the name of the future, but sometimes even human life itself. In such a historical context it is hard to imagine the formation of any perception of nature, other than that expressed in the popular slo-



gan of the 1930s: "We cannot wait, for charity from nature; our task is to seize it ourselves!" Similar slogans adorned the classrooms of secondary schools. The younger generation was brought up on slogans such as these.

6) This triumphant psychology created a particular climate under whose conditions gigantic construction works and projects transforming the face of the natural environment were implemented. Moreover, their value and prestige were considered to be enormous. Powerful hydro-electric complexes in river plains surpassed all other analogous, peace-time undertakings. Beneath the reservoirs of the Volga and Kama basins alone, 2.5 million hectares of fertile land were lost. The vast quantities of hydro-electric energy produced from 1966 to 1985, at the astronomic cost of 130 billion roubles (209 billion US dollars), led to one third of the surrounding 23 million hectares of drained and irrigated land being rendered unfit for agricultural use thanks to the violation of the balance of nature. Gigantic building sites, proudly referred to as the building sites of communism, in the words of the famous Soviet author V. Rasputin, were turned into slaughter-houses.<sup>2</sup>

In more than a hundred cities harmful waste products exceeded sanitary norms by dozens of times, transforming them into disaster areas. The ecological catastrophe affected such natural treasures as the fresh-water lakes Baikal and Ladoga, and the Aral Sea in Central Asia.

At the start of the 1980s a plan unprecedented in its immensity, was elaborated and partially realized, which would have transferred part of the waters of northern rivers, flowing into the Arctic Ocean, to the south in order to irrigate agricultural land. It is difficult to imagine the extent of the ecological catastrophe to which this plan, which envisaged the flooding of huge areas of arid land, would have led, had it not been shelved at the last moment. Nuclear energy plans have been established at great speed, expensive space programmes have been implemented, and more and more factories producing machinery and equipment for industrial purposes have sprung up. This in turn required ever more energy and other resources. The economy finds itself in a vicious circle, in which energy and other resources are expended on the ever-increasing production of machinery and equipment, which, in their turn, require ever more energy and resources. A Soviet economist has illustrated this vicious circle of the economy and its alienation from humanity by the following example: "In this country we extract 252 million tons of ore per annum. This is five times more than in the USA. By the open-mine extraction of ore, we destroy thousands of hectares of valuable 'black-earth', disturb the hydrological regime of large regions of land and thus create a water shortage. Then, in order to process the ore, enormous processing and metallurgical plants are built. In the course of metal processing, pollution of the air and of river basins occurs. The processed metal is then taken to construction of cyclopean rolling mills. Here

they are made into sections, used in the construction of rotor excavators for the extraction of iron ore. One such monster possesses astonishing destructive powers. It is capable of digging up 6,500 cubic metres per hour. Inevitably, a vast quantity of energy and labour is used up in this way. Thus, the circle is closed and a new technological circle begins with the same depressingly insignificant efficiency in terms of the positive benefit derived for the people and the tragically high losses inflicted on the environment."<sup>3</sup>

7) In as much as the accelerated growth of industry was closely linked with definite political and ideological aims, opposition on any grounds (including ecological ones) to such development was regarded as highly suspicious and any attempts to express protest were decisively halted. And yet in the heart of society, and especially in intellectual circles, concern for ecological issues was growing and combining with worries, provoked by the dehumanizing and ineffective development of the economy, the erosion of cultural traditions, the moral state of society and the discouraging human rights situation.

The Church, which through participation in the work of ecumenical organizations and bilateral contacts with other Churches was involved in the mature debate of those issues, which we today classify as justice, peace and the integrity of creation, found herself in a peculiar position. The Church's voice was not heard in our society at that time because religion and the Church were considered to be an annoying remnant of the old order, ideologically alien to the future towards which the current generation was striving. Nevertheless, the very fact of the Church's existence in an ideologically homogeneous society was of enormous importance in itself. The Church introduced an element of pluralism. Her existence in spite of organized and powerful atheistic propaganda gave cause for thought. Her ethical and patriotic standpoints struck a chord with many who were anxious about the fate of the country. Through active work abroad, through the resolutions and documents of the ecumenical organizations, through peace conferences the voice of the Church returned, in a roundabout way to her country and was heard in political and public circles. It is hard today to assess the degree of influence the Church exerted on the formation by society of new approaches to the questions of justice, peace and the integrity of creation, but the very fact of the existence of that influence is indisputable. And it is fitting to mention at this conference: it was in fact a genuine ecumenical influence, formed by the participation of our sisters and brothers from all over the world, sharing with us their experiences of confessing the Christian faith in the face of the challenges of the modern world. We render thanks to God for those gifts with which He enriches His people in the ecumenical movement.

8) Growing alarm and anxiety within our society has been eased by the phenomenon known as "perestroika". Perestroika offers radical economic reform,



aimed at shifting the economy towards the people. It entails a transfer from extensive methods of management to intensive methods which take account of the limits of resources and ecological consequences of economic activity, the deideologization of foreign policy, the democratization of domestic policy and the moral renewal of society. The most important lesson which our society has learnt in its recent history is that morality and the social development of society are inseparably interwoven. Academician D. Likhachev, one of our most eminent contemporaries, refers to this truth thus: "Our recent history bears stark witness to this truth: in the twentieth century it is impossible to realize the most enlightened social ideas by coercive, murderous methods from the dark ages, ignoring man's conscience, his reason, inner freedom and personal right to make his own moral decisions. The palaces and temples will not be built on blood."<sup>4</sup> The conviction is growing, that the impasse in which our economy finds itself, and the stagnation which is paralyzing all spheres of public life are essentially caused not so much by the mistakes of specialists and politicians as by that "spiritual orphanhood" in which society found itself, for the system had destroyed its moral foundations.<sup>5</sup>

This conclusion is in keeping with the fact that the Church, on the periphery of society, witnessed with a weak and sometimes almost inaudible voice. Today this voice, frequently supported by the voice of society, is heard by all. It is even more than just the voice of the Church. It is the voice of a people that has survived a historical experience, unique in its tragedy, and it is an experience that cannot and must not be left untold. Humanity will lose much if it refuses to listen to the witness, gained by the suffering of a great people. Through the prism of this experience we can interpret the spiritual essence of the current crisis of civilization as the alienation of man from God, from fellow man and from nature and as the destruction of the integrity of the human person.

9) Since renaissance times the main tendency of societal development has been clearly revealed: politics, economics, science, and technology have all become autonomous spheres, not recognizing the laws of morality or spiritual principles. Egotistical interests and the striving for power in politics, the thirst for wealth in economics, popular nationalism, the power of technology over man—all this is the result of an autonomous, isolated form of development, independent of the spiritual basis. Since the age of Enlightenment a new relationship between man and nature has taken shape. People have begun to see in a different way the connection between God and Nature. Secularization has taken hold not only of man and society but also of nature, which has become an entity in its own right in people's consciousness, without any link with God. By alienating nature from God and secularizing it, man has changed the very conditions of his relationship with nature. It has ceased to be a subject and has become an object of study and exploitation.<sup>6</sup>

The secularization of society, man and nature, the scientific world-view which does not allow for moral principles has led to man's sensation of, in the words of V. Rozanov, "a fearful freedom". It was the freedom from any sense of moral responsibility that provoked the following train of thought: "There is no supreme law to which man is subject, there is no set of responsibilities, other than those which have been devised by people themselves. Today they have one perception of good and evil, tomorrow they will have another."<sup>8</sup> But, most tragically of all, it must be recognized that this autonomy of human behaviour has in no way led to the emancipation of man himself. Insofar as civilization has grown increasingly independent of the human spirit, man himself has become a slave to civilization. By subjecting his spirit to "temporal requirements" and ordering his life not according to moral laws but to those of the world, man is placing his own integrity under threat.

10) The 20th century has exposed the most dramatic effect of this development: the staggering acceleration of scientific and technical progress as an autonomous human activity, entirely free from any moral constrictions. This autonomy is capable of changing the very face of human society and man's style of life and behaviour, of separating man from nature and reinforcing social conflicts. If before the misfortunes of human society and personality could be ascribed to man's limited potentialities, to his dependence on the arbitrary forces of nature, in short, to man's weakness, then now the fundamental misfortunes stem from man's strength. The new reality is a reality founded by man, which somehow does not belong to the former cosmic order. This cosmic order is breaking apart and a new order of existence is being established, in which the extent of man's strength and power over nature grows ever greater and in which at the same time man is ever more reliant on his own might.

To what extent does the spiritual and physical make-up of man match this new order of existence? To what extent is man capable of retaining his own identity in conditions, when technology acquires power over him, when the environment in which he lives is under threat of annihilation, when war may become a global, exterminating, genuinely cosmic catastrophe, when the absence of justice and the degradation of the personality create an atmosphere of ever-increasing tension? Simultaneously, the influence of technology effects a frightening acceleration of time. The present moment is no longer noticeable to man. It has become merely a means for the next moment. Ever greater activeness is required from people, and days merge into the poorly defined and rapid flow of time. But this external activeness is accompanied by spiritual stagnation, for there is neither time nor energy left for the fulfilment of spiritual needs. The new life-order affirms its own values, the most important of which are material benefits and power, which have long ceased to be considered as means, the use of which



could guarantee conditions for the overall development and perfection of personality and society. They have become ends in themselves. But without the help of moral reference points their achievement has become extremely difficult for the increasing requirements, multiplied by technical advances, constantly raise the standards. In highly-developed countries and in certain strata of society a huge accumulation of material wealth and concentration of power can be witnessed, whilst at the same time and to an ever greater degree people become slaves to consumption, constantly striving to renew what they already possess. This applies particularly to the West, but in the East too materialism is enslaving more and more people. Here this psychology is exacerbated by the tension between desires and possibilities, the urge to attain the Western level of consumption, no matter what. The consumer psychology leads to an "idealization" of the Western technological society, to the urge to imitate rich Americans and Western Europeans, to possess their material riches and comforts.

It is quite clear that moral and spiritual development does not correspond with scientific and technical development and this is one of the fundamental reasons for the disturbed balance of man and human society. The most obvious proof of this is the threat of nuclear cataclysm and the scandalous lack of justice in all corners of the world. What in fact is the meaning of communities of plenty, continually increasing their level of consumption, in the face of destitution, hunger, illness, illiteracy and the deprivation of rights of such a large proportion of the world's population? What meaning can we attach to the arms-race when even a tiny percentage of the resources devoted to it could feed, cure and teach all who need it? Of course, explanations of a historic, economic, political or ideological nature can always be found and there is always the temptation to see in them the reasons for events. But Christians, and of course others too, can see the real reason for the dire state of the contemporary world and can also recognize the truth that, by subjugating personal and public life to spiritual and moral principles, it is possible for humanity to emerge from the impasse in which it presently finds itself.

11) It is true that Christianity has itself recently been accused of effecting a distortion in the development of civilization, having created in particular the preconditions for nature's enslavement to humanity. These reproaches are not only the result of an erroneous exegesis that can be satisfactorily counterposed by a different analysis of biblical texts.<sup>9</sup> They reveal a complete misunderstanding of the essence of Christianity. Nevertheless, the response of theologians is still more surprising who, defending the Christian position, have run to another extreme, going to great lengths to show that Christianity, far from destroying the primordial, idyllic relationship between man and nature, did not even attempt to elevate man above nature. But the honest response to these accusations would be to say that Christianity did indeed destroy the

ancient and essentially pagan relationship between man and nature by elevating man above the rest of creation, thus facilitating his study and mastery of it. And if the whole truth be known, the ancient, idyllic relationship between man and nature never actually existed.

The drama of the Fall plunged man and his free spirit into the depths of natural necessity. Man's immersion into nature, the biblical image of which is the expulsion from paradise, entailed his actual dependence on nature, his torturous fear of nature. Fallen man, abandoned in nature and left to his own devices, became its slave. The enslavement to nature and the dependence on the laws of natural necessity were far from harmless. Evil became a reality, affecting not only man but the whole of creation. Man, having lost his liberty and fallen under the power of the harsh laws of natural existence, began to search for a religious escape from this captivity. He started to deify nature and worship demons, which was the basis for the development of ancient pagan mythology. Man, having sinned, had destroyed the divine order of life. *Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God... their foolish heart was darkened... and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator* (Rom. 1. 21,25).

By the Incarnation, by the redemption of man and creation, Christianity has liberated man from the elemental power of the earth, raised him to be an independent, spiritual being, freed him from subjugation to natural necessities and carried up to heaven. Christianity restored to man that inner freedom of which he was deprived under the power of elemental forces. Man's slavery to nature was in fact slavery to his very self, to his passions and instincts. Man could not escape such enslavement by his own efforts alone, for his freedom had been weakened and had degenerated into responsiveness to necessity. It is through the Incarnation, the Divine Humanity of Christ, through redemption that man has regained that inner freedom, the lost sense of being the son of God, and has emerged from the closed circle of elemental, natural existence.

Liberation from the forces of natural necessity was to lead to man's absorption into his own spiritual world and to the execution there of a great war, as a result of which the spirit would triumph over human passions and instincts, subjecting nature to the demands of moral law. This victory has been achieved by Christian saints, and not just ascetics and hermits, but also by those who remained in the world. This was the battle for the new man and it has not been confined to the early Christian period. It was taking place in both East and West in the middle ages and in the ensuing period. Undoubtedly, it is going on even today, for without the battle for the new man, without the overcoming of old Adam, there can be no real Christianity.

At the mercy of the nature, ancient man not only worshipped the elements but was also forced to exploit the environment to ensure his continued existence. He cultivated the land, reaped the harvest, hunted



wild animals and caught fish. In order to protect himself from evil spirits he resorted to magic, which was a means of obtaining knowledge and controlling nature.

The liberation of humanity from the powers of nature was accompanied by desacralizing nature and destroying pagan perceptions of the world. Nature was no longer the dwelling place of demons. Magic, the interaction with the spirits of nature, was perceived as a link with impure forces, as a deviation from Christianity and a return to paganism. Developing subsequently, science and the technological mastery of nature were the latter consequences of the Christian liberation from demonolatry.

Contemporary critics of Christianity from the ecological movement are correct in asserting that it was in fact Christianity that rendered possible the development of positive natural science and technology. People who were still communicating with the "spirit of nature" and leading their lives on the basis of a mythological understanding of the world were incapable of influencing their lives by means of a free cognizant act. It was necessary to suppress the idea of the demonic properties of nature, man had to perceive himself as somehow independent of nature before he could begin freely to comprehend it.

12) But does it follow that long-reaching conclusions should be made about Christianity's responsibility for the distorted path of scientific and technical progress which today threatens the whole of creation with destruction? Did the liberation of man from the power of nature inevitably lead to violence against it, to its enslavement?

It is impossible to deduce an urge to exploit nature either from the Bible or from Christian tradition. According to the Book of Genesis, the world is a positive reality (Gen. 1. 10, 12, 18), and its value, as the participants in the Orthodox consultation in Sofia correctly observed, is determined not only by the fact that it is good by virtue of its very existence, but also because it was created for God and for the Kingdom of God as the place of Incarnation and worship. The world itself is destined to be transfigured, to become the new heaven and the new earth.<sup>10</sup> Man is part of creation and belongs to the material world by virtue of his physical nature. This organic link between man and the universe was clearly perceived by the holy fathers.<sup>11</sup> But though he is part of creation because he is flesh, man, because of his spirit, belongs to God and on the basis of this duality occupies a special place within creation. He bridges the gap between two worlds, the material and the spiritual. The state of the world is dependent upon the state of man's relations with God, upon man's spiritual condition. Creation may either be *subject to vanity* and find itself in the *bondage of corruption* or be *delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God* (Rom. 8. 20-21). It is in this way than man's vocation to take charge of creation should be understood. Man is not the master of creation, he has not been given power over life

and death, but he is called to tend and preserve what has been entrusted him by the Creator (Gen. 1.28; 2.15). In the Fall man lost this capacity, and because of people and together with people creation became associated with sin. The destruction of harmony in the relations between man and nature was expressed in man's enslavement to nature and in the subjugation of his free spirit to the laws of natural necessity.

For this very reason, the Resurrection of Christ was significant, not only for the destiny of humanity but for the whole of creation (Rom. 8. 19-21). In Him it is that all things are gathered together and reconciled (Eph. 1. 9-10; Col. 1.20). Hence, not only man but all creation has a future in Christ, which presupposes the restoration of the primordial relationships between man and nature. Not the enslavement of one to another (it is not important who is slave to whom, for slavery itself is a violation of the will of God) but the harmonious combination of man and nature. This harmony is achieved by means of a mastery by man over nature which imparts it the quality of the new, redeemed creation which is the revelation of the sons of God for which creation hopefully waits. Therefore, there is no need to deny or belittle man's position in nature. It is important to recognize that the future of creation depends on man, on his ability to put off the old Adam and put on the new Adam and translate the beauty of this transfiguration to the whole universe. Man and creation are one interlinked reality and for this reason the face of the reality, the future of our world, depends on the spiritual condition and behaviour of man.

13) Christianity has certainly delivered man from the power of nature and elevated him, allowing him to occupy the place in the universe set aside for him by the Creator. But this by no means implies that Christianity has predetermined man's behaviour. Christ restored to us our lost freedom and the possibility to be coworkers with the Creator, stewards of creation, a little lower than the angels (Ps. 8. 3-8), in order to tend all that has been created. This affords people the opportunity to develop their own distinctive cognitive and organizational means and capabilities for the care of creation. But it is always possible for man to use his freedom in other ways. It is important to recognize that it is not man's stewardship or the means he employs, including science and technology, to effect it that threatens creation, but the reality of sin, leading to destruction, ruin and death. Man is called to communication with God, to the fulfilment of the will of God in his stewardship of nature. The abuse of creation occurs when man rejects the order of existence defined by God, when he distorts God's will and casts himself in the role of God. In this way man ceases to be God's steward and starts to govern by himself and for himself, subjecting nature to his own egotistical goals. By placing himself at the centre of life, at the centre of the universe, man causes the deharmonization of his relations both with nature and with those around him. Creation beco-



mes a resource for the satisfaction of man's ever-increasing requirements and science and technology become the powerful means of the mastering and use of that resource. The balance between man and nature is again destroyed, but this time it is nature that finds itself enslaved.

14) It is obvious today that the idea of continuous rectilinear development, formed during the Enlightenment and the industrial revolution, was erroneous. Since the driving force behind such development was egotistical anthropocentrism; it inevitably led to the exhaustion of resources and the over-burdening of the biosphere. Any hope that new technology might be capable of saving the world is naive to say the least. History has shown that every new round of technical development brings in its wake unpredictable and dangerous consequences for both man and the environment. But this in no way suggests that scientific discoveries should be belittled. It is impossible to heal the world by a return to the stone age and such an act would be wrong because it presupposes an escape from one's very self and an unnatural rejection of history. In all probability it would be impossible anyway for man does not have the power to turn back time. It is senseless to defame science, technology and contemporary civilization. We should instead take spiritual possession of them, subject them to the spirit. To this end a new ethical basis for social development is needed so that natural resources and the achievements of the human mind may be used in accordance with moral purposes.

15) But how was it the course of development that has brought humanity to the edge of the abyss originated in Christian Europe? After all, in the Christian world-view, creation and human history are not autonomous phenomena. This is God's creation in which His mercy and righteous anger are spread abroad. How and when in the history of European development did the anthropocentric trend arise, leading in the long run to that liberal humanism in whose atmosphere today's wholesale destruction of the environment is taking place?<sup>12</sup>

In formal, external terms the facts are well known: the medieval concept of the unity of truth, contained within the unity of nature and the supernatural, disintegrated in the course of the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment and the industrial revolution. The eschatological hope of salvation was replaced by human self-assurance, according to which the environment became an object that could be exploited for technical progress. It is also well known that in response to this, theology ignored nature and left it to the scientists. The situation has been accurately described thus: "The environment was rejected by Western theology at the very time when decisive action for the benefit of nature and creation should have been taken."<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore, though neither the Bible, nor Church tradition suggests man adopt a utilitarian attitude to

creation, anthropocentric ideas also bore an influence on theology. The history of this process is well charted, as also are the simple "scientific" explanations. However, none of them deals with the question "Why?". N. Berdyaev, the eminent Russian philosopher, ventured to take a look at the undisclosed essence of the historical process. In his book, "The Meaning of History" he writes: "Historical knowledge reveals a knowledge of spiritual activity, which is richer and more complex than activity provoked by material and economic factors. Man's external activeness has a spiritual basis. Failure to take this factor into account renders an integral understanding of the historical process impossible. It is precisely in the 'historical' that the essence of existence is revealed, that the inner spiritual essence of man is revealed and not simply the outer appearance, but the inner spiritual essence of man."<sup>14</sup> The Second Vatican Council correctly asserted that this inner spiritual essence of man is inseparable from his corporeal essence. And hence the whole of the material world finds its genuine meaning, not from without but from within.<sup>15</sup> And this applies equally to history.

Consequently, in answer to the question "why does man fall into the heresy of anthropocentrism?" it is not so much necessary to consider the revelations of Galilei, Copernicus and Newton, the ideas of Descartes and Bacon, as to consider the spiritual condition of man and society. The idea of anthropocentrism, man's self-assurance as an autonomous and supreme value, corresponded with the overall spiritual state of Europe at the time. It was organic in relation to the inner spiritual world of those and consequent generations. Scientific discoveries and the corresponding philosophical generalizations allowed the rationalization of this condition and of its logical basis.

However, in our own troubled times under the pressure of various crises, for which man himself bears responsibility, objective preconditions for the rethinking of egotistical anthropocentrism have arisen.

16) But this rethinking will not bear fruit without a change of spirit. Man must change within, he must throw the challenge to his own egoism and this process can only begin with penitence. Metanoia means a complete change of heart. It is based on a recognition of sin in its individual and social forms and enables man to reject false values. Penitence awakes the conscience and begins the process of changing both the personality and the world. It ushers into being the new man.

This new man does not stop being human—it is not Nietzsche's superman; the new man is based on that within man which is eternal. Such a man cannot be formed by economics, politics or social structures, for these factors relate primarily to the external side of human existence. The experience of those who lived through Stalin's camps underlines the fact that man is capable of preserving his inner freedom and dignity and of retaining his humanity even in the most inhuman conditions. The phenomenon of the new pre-



supposes inner movement and change, man's rejection of his own ego as the centre of existence and the recognition that the law of love is the most fundamental law of life and that the failure to keep it leads to the death and total destruction of creation. Without this inner process, nothing, not even the most just social system or the most favourable life-conditions, can create the new man. Man in his essence never has been and never can be an object, wholly controlled by nature and social circumstances.

But if this spiritual revival does not occur another prospect altogether is in store for us—the definitive establishment of another type of man, alienated from his family, from society, from nature, occupied exclusively with himself, his material aims and the satisfaction of his ever-growing requirements. Such a man is devoted to strength and success, is indifferent to others and merciless to the weak. His whole activeness takes place on a horizontal plane. He takes pride in his independence from the transcendental. But this is not the new man. It is none other than old Adam, who in conditions of irrepressible and technological progress is forever deprived of the capability to discern ends from means and who has lost the meaning of life.

Today the human person is under threat from all sides, both in situations where individualism and consumerism pervert genuine life values, quietly transforming man into an object to be manipulated by those in possession of real might and power, and in situations where values and priorities are determined by a collective which suffocates the individual.

17) One particular feature of the present time helps to explain the deep and real link between ethics and survival. That which previously was revealed to the spiritual consciousness of ascetics, mystics and great philosophers is now comprehensible to scientists, politicians and the general public. Never before have external conditions been so favourable for witnessing to the significance of ethics for man and the universe.

Christians must not let this historic opportunity to give clear ethical answers to the questions of modern civilization pass by. Although discussions of ethics are usually contextual, they must correspond with the absolute ethical purposes, given in the Bible and in Church Tradition. The Christian witness will lose any semblance of conviction if it contains elements of ethical relativism and if in the near future it does not acquire the features of ethical consensus. To attain this consensus two particular obstacles must be overcome: one relates to personal ethics, the other to social ethics. Horizontalism in Christian theology is thus as erroneous and dangerous as individualistic spiritualism. The ethical norms with which the Creator endowed human nature are united and indivisible. It is impossible to be a moral person and an immoral politician or academic.

18) In order to avoid relativism Christian ethics must not lose its fundamental value orientation, which theocentrism guarantees. Theocentric ethics, affirming

the integrity, interdependence and value of creation as a whole, regards man and nature not as two autonomous and self-sufficient entities, but as that which finds its meaning and purpose in the Creator. Such an ethic, while overcoming anthropocentrism, does not go to the opposite extreme, and thus disassociates itself from the theory of the autonomy of nature. For such a theory implies naturocentrism, another paganism.

Theocentric ethics has a vocation to establish a genuine balance between man and nature, stressing the common destiny of all creation—the glorification of God. Both man and nature find their true meaning in their transfiguration, in their approach towards God. Such an ethics attaches value to both and subjects both to the supreme value, that is to God. In this way man is seen to be elevated above the rest of creation, but nevertheless, a part of the interdependent and organically integral world, in which nature has its own specific value. It ceases to be merely an object, exploited by man for his own purposes. On the basis of this ethic it is possible to organize people to overcome crises, for it presupposes man's rejection of the tendency to exercise dominion over nature and this entails the voluntary restriction of consumption, a simple life-style, the careful use of science and technology, respect for life, the thrifty use of resources and their just distribution for the benefit of all.

It is necessary to stress the last of these. Theocentric ethics is not restricted by ecology. It cultivates respect for the life and liberty of all creatures. The moral aspects of "the integrity of creation" are closely linked to the concepts of "justice" and "peace".

19) Moreover, it should be remembered that theocentric ethics is a necessarily religious concept that may well prove unacceptable to non-religious people. The question arises: how can Christians cooperate with people of other religions and ideologies, without compromising thus their ethics? After all, this sort of cooperation must be based on some common factor.

The first indicator of this is the presence of common concerns. Christians are obliged to find ways of communicating and cooperating with those who share their concerns about the condition of human civilization and this requires wisdom and tact in choice of language and use of arguments.

In the course of discussion the issue of a global consensus, wider than that between Christians alone, arises. Without a logically expressed consensus it is difficult to anticipate the success of any joint activity of those of differing religious, ideological and political convictions, from different peoples and cultures. The only possible consensus is that moral consensus, based on absolute moral values, beyond particular world-views and belonging to humanity as a whole. The religious understanding of morality, as having its origins in God and, therefore as absolute and inherent in all human beings on the one hand, and as the acknow-



ledgement of the priority of moral values common to all mankind in contemporary liberal humanism, on the other, affords the possibility for the construction of such a consensus. The attainment of this consensus necessitates the freezing of that problem which in the long term will in all probability prove insoluble, that is the question of the original source of morality. The accent should be placed on the absolute and unchanging significance of moral values common to all mankind. The introduction of the idea of moral absolutes bridges the gap dividing the Christian and the Marxist, believer and non-believer and forms the nucleus of the common ethical consensus. Each side may use its own language, but the important thing is that each language describes one and the same set of moral values, the basis for which is the absolute principle.

For the Christian such a consensus is truly theocentric, for the Marxist it is characterized as a moral system, in accordance with the idea of absolute values common to all humanity. The critical factor is that the system be free from relativism. In this way the general understanding of morality and the corresponding value of human experience allow the possibility of universal dialogue. Obviously, inalterable moral criteria relating to reality can lead to different conclusions for the very concept of reality is variable and our perceptions of it are relative and differing. This implies the likelihood of divergence and disagreement. Any global consensus must recognize the general right of dissent, provided that dissent does not destroy the system of values at the heart of the consensus.

20) In all this the human conscience plays a hugely significant role. The universality of the conscience unites all people and facilitates their search for truth and the solution of moral problems. It is a well known fact that the conscience is deformed by sin, but nevertheless, it remains the one human capacity able to absorb the moral law with which God has invested our nature. The conscience is able to regulate desires, challenge egotism and mould human behaviour and therefore today great attention should be paid to the ecology of the human conscience. Concern for the preservation and well-being of man's conscience is at the heart of concern for justice, peace and the integrity of creation, for the genuine realization of even the loftiest moral consensus is impossible without the conscience.

21) Since at the heart of all modern crises lies the moral crisis, the renewal of moral responsibility is a task of fundamental importance. Christians have a duty to help modern man understand the direct dependence between survival and morality. To commit evil in personal or public life becomes a globally dangerous act.

For this reason moral education is important as never before. On the basis of broad dialogue and moral consensus a formula must be established, which could be termed a universal ethical catechism for the 21st century. Such a catechism should include absolute, common moral norms, that is those norms

with which God has invested human nature. Children and adults must be educated to recognize the unshakable validity of these norms, so that they may put them into effect in their dealing with the environment and with each other.

Moral education in parishes, schools and universities must be culminated with a ceremony of acceptance of moral obligations. The participants in the seminar "The Science and Theology of Creation" (Bossey, 18-22 April, 1988) made the suggestion that all students embarking on a scientific career should resolve to abstain from all forms of research, capable of inflicting harm on mankind and the environment, to take a kind of hippocratic oath.<sup>16</sup> This suggestion ought to be expanded. Each graduate from school, college or university, about to begin his independent working life should make the solemn moral pledge: to construct his relations with his fellow men, with the environment and with society on the basis of a global moral code.

Of course this sort of hippocratic oath on its own stands for very little unless it is accompanied by inner struggle and spiritual growth. And therefore the moral regeneration of the individual and of society should become the affair of each and every person, the great common task of humanity at the start of the 21st century.

22) It is precisely with this task of moral and spiritual renewal, that the future of Europe and the world must be linked. Without this renewal there is little hope for the future of humanity, such is the extent of the apocalyptic threat hanging over us.

Since it is not the fundamental task of the Christian Churches to make political, economic and social decisions but to stir up and give shape to the human conscience, the Churches, by virtue of this specificity, find themselves in the forefront of the contemporary battle. Their activity must be directed towards the overcoming of that spiritual-moral crisis which is the basic cause of violations of justice and threats to peace and the integrity of creation. This singularly correct strategy must not be lost. Christians must maintain their spiritual vigilance so as not to lose sight of basic goals before them. But on the other hand the Churches must not remain aloof and indifferent to those political, economic, social, scientific and cultural changes which effect, or on the contrary, hinder the realization of ethical norms in everyday life. To this end the Churches must be concerned with politics and with economics and with science and with all other spheres of social life. The Church must have the right and the opportunity to express her opinion on these issues, guided not by partisan, class, national or corporate concerns but exclusively by the moral guidelines contained in the Bible and in Church Tradition. Christians should measure their own experience against these guidelines in order to find the right perspective and true approach to existing problems.



23) Of all the ills afflicting our continent there is one which is particularly painful and dangerous: the division of Europe. Thanks to this division one important error remained intact. It was assumed, and some assume even today, that Europe is threatened by the very fact that two different socio-economic systems coexist within it. But on closer inspection it seems that international divisions by no means always occur because of different systems. This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the start of World War II, which was certainly not fought simply between two sides with different socio-political systems, capitalism and socialism. The driving force behind the war was the ideology of national superiority and the desire to subject the rest of the world to that ideology. It was a war for a "united Europe", maybe even a united world, bound together by means of totalitarianism and national-chauvinism, and countries from different socio-political systems joined together to fight this horrific idea. What was the foundation of the anti-Nazi coalition? Did it emerge exclusively as a result of political and military pragmatism? Most probably, not. Apart from political and military pragmatism, it was united by the general pathos of war, at whose heart are found concrete, moral values. Somehow at that moment ideology was withdrawn from politics, giving way to morality. Unfortunately, it was very quickly restored and for a long time its moral aspect was stifled.

An important conclusion can be drawn from this: diversity is not a cause for, and even less a synonym of estrangement. On the contrary in certain circumstances it can be a factor to consolidate agreement and facilitate peace. European experience teaches us that there are two conditions that must be observed if diversity is not to degenerate into estrangement. Firstly, ideological differences should have no place in international relations, because ideologies are different and the interests of people in the face of common problems and common threats are one. And that which was true fifty years ago still holds good today: "...for though ideologies may be diametrically opposed to each other, the will to survive and to avert war is universal and supreme."<sup>17</sup> The place in politics once occupied by ideology must be given over to morality.

Secondly, a socio-political system can promote peace between nations and reinforce agreement if it is a system based on peace, that is, if it guarantees justice and if it is not divided and falling into disintegration. The disintegration of nations and states occurs within them, and the violation of justice within results in tensions without. In this respect it is important to stress that the concept of justice is closely linked to human rights. Since the aim of social existence is the perfection of the human personality, justice must be understood as the conditions of this existence which offer people equal opportunities for the development of their potential. Justice guarantees the freedom of the personality, without it perfection is impossible. It is for this reason that a just society recognizes and respects the freedom of the individual and guaran-

tees his rights. Such societies and systems strengthen international confidence and thus serve as a factor building up agreement and communication in conditions of socio-political and socio-economic pluralism.

As the twentieth century draws to a close there are promising signs the division of our continent may be overcome, whilst existing distinctions may be preserved. The new thinking, removing politics from ideology and coupling it with morality, is occupying the minds of political leaders, albeit slowly. In the USSR, perestroika is making the economy more responsive to people and social life and thus giving cause for great hopes for profound democratization and greater justice and attention to human rights. The growing role of the general public in the East and West in the definition of international politics, the growth of "people's diplomacy" and widening contacts and exchange of information are creating a new climate, distinguished by greater trust and mutual understanding.

The common European home is not one large room. That would be suffocating and wearisome. A common home can and should be built from several and various rooms, but in them must live one family, professing one and the same set of social values.

24) In our striving for peace and justice and in the creation of a new European community, we must pay close attention to the means we wish to use. Can a happy home be built on the tears of a tortured, innocent child, asks F. Dostoevsky. The answer here cannot be reduced to a simple "yes" or "no". If for the achievement of a goal, means are employed that essentially contradict that goal, then the goal will never be achieved. The means will push the goal into the background and the goal itself will become nothing more than empty rhetoric.

Such concepts as peace and justice should be considered from this point of view. If the achievement of peace is suggested through rearmament, the modernization or refinement of weapons, the growth of deterrents, the militarization of space, etc., then obviously, peace will not be achieved. Peace will become no more than a feature of political rhetoric and will be buried by other aims, whose achievement will require energy, resources, intellectual potential, creative inspiration and people's lives. The maintenance of peace "from a position of strength" requires too much strength and has its own momentum, sufficient to turn the achievement of a lasting peace into a distant and unrealistic possibility.

Exactly the same can be said about justice. European history offers several instructive examples. The liberty, equality and fraternity proclaimed by the French revolution and rooted in violence in the end turned into rhetoric and empty dreams which had nothing in common with the capitalist society of the 19th century. Reference has already been made to the dramatic experience of my own country. Liberty cannot be achieved through violence, equality through hatred, justice through deceit and arbitrary rule because these methods poison the conscience and offend man's moral



feelings. The means in the battle for justice must be just. It is impossible to separate the battle from justice itself.

25) And here it is necessary to return to our earlier theme: the struggle for justice, peace and the integrity of creation is the struggle for an order of life based on authentic spiritual and moral values and serving as a means for the disclosure of the potential of the whole of creation. It is a spiritual battle *not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places* (Eph. 6.12). Hence this battle must be one of penitence, renewal of the spirit, self-discipline, the creation of a new way of life and of new life standards. It is a battle for an integral system of values in which ends may not be replaced by means. Today the call to battle may be taken up by all, not only Christians, for the call is made to the moral principles inherent in all.

For Christians, the rejection of egotism and self-gratification, trust in God, and a life of love for one's neighbour are the fixed conditions for personal liberation and salvation. This path to salvation is today the path of salvation for all human civilization.

#### NOTES

1. G. Brundland. Our Common Future—A Challenge to the Churches, JPIC Resource Materials. 4. 4. WCC
2. V. Rasputin. *Zemlya, ekologiya, perestroika* (The Earth,

Ecology and Perestroika). A supplementary report to the management plenum of the Writers' Union of the USSR). *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, Jan. 25, 1989.

3. *Ibid.*

4. D. Likhachev *Nauka bez morali pogibnet* (Without morality science will die"). *Izvestia*, March 25, 1989

5. *Ibid.*

6. cf. W. Granberg and W. Michaelson. *A. Worldly Spirituality*, Harper-Row. San Francisco 1984, p. 38.

7. The term "secularization" is here used in the meaning set forth by Charles West in his accurate definition: "Secularization is the releasing of areas of thought and spheres of life from religious or even metaphysical control and the attempt to learn how to live within them according to the guidelines they themselves offer" (*ibid.* p. 38).

8. V. Rozanov, *Religiya i cultura* (Religion and Culture). St. Petersburg, 1899, p. 20.

9. As for example in the report of Patricia Wilson-Kastner, "Does the World Have a Future?". Church and Society Documents, August, 1988, No. 5.

10. Orthodox Perspectives on Creation. Report. Sofia, Bulgaria. October 24-November 2, 1989.

11. Gregory of Nazianzus *Slovo 45* (Sermon 45). Moscow, 1844. Vol. 4, p. 157.

12. James Barr. "The Ecological Controversy and the Old Testament." Ecology and Religion in History. p. 73

13. G. Altner. "Theology and Natural Science: The Debate Today." Church and Society Documents. 1988 August. No. 4, p. 14.

14. N. Berdyaev. *The Meaning of History*, Berlin, 1923.

15. The Second Vatican Council. Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, "Gaudium et Spes", p. 14.

16. "Science and the Theology of Creation". Church and Society Documents. 1988, August. No. 4, p. 50.

17. M. Gorbachev. *Perestroika i novoye myshlenie dlya nashei strany i dlya vsego mira* (Perestroika and New Thinking for our Country and the World). Moscow, 1988, p. 146.



# ORTHODOX SISTER CHURCHES

## At the Sources of Christian Theology

It is the common view of scholars that the Christian teaching was first set forth systematically by Origen, who is therefore considered the father of Christian theology. However, it was long before Origen, in early monuments of Christian writing, that we encounter the first attempts at systematization. We see early writers use philosophical terms and concepts which are compatible with Holy Scripture and we see them argue against terms and concepts which are at odds with it. This applies to the handling of problems involved in getting to know God, the teaching on God's names, discourses on the nature and origin of matter, the human soul and becoming "Godlike" as the purpose of religious life.

The present article deals with these sources of Christian theology, special attention being given to those philosophical doctrines which are examined by 2nd and 3rd-century Church Fathers in expounding the teaching on God, the Creation and the Divine economy.

The most proficient in philosophy among the Christian writers of the 2nd and 3rd centuries are St. Theophilus of Antioch, St. Justin the Martyr, and Clement of Alexandria.

St. Theophilus's *Epistle to Autolycus* testifies to a knowledge of both Plato and the late Platonists. In discussing God-knowledge, St. Theophilus is probably the first among Christian writers to use an analogy from Plato's *Laws* and *Republic*, where the contemplation of God is compared to looking at the sun. St. Theophilus writes: "God is visible to those with seeing souls. Everyone has eyes, but they are, as it were, veiled and cannot peer at the sun... If man cannot peer at the sun..., is not a mortal even less capable of contemplating the ineffable glory of God?"<sup>1</sup> (Cf. in Plato: "Just as one peering at the sun direct in the daytime feels as if there were night all round, so we too shall not say that we can ever see the Mind mortal eyes."<sup>2</sup>) We find in St. Theophilus the beginnings of cataphatic and apophatic theology, a feature likewise traceable to Platonic influences. "If I call Him Light, I speak of Him as the Creator; if I call Him Mind, I speak of His wisdom; if I call Him Strength, I speak of His might; if I call Him Providence, I speak of His goodness; if I call Him Father, I speak of His love."<sup>3</sup> But none of these determinations of the Divinity is adequate. "His glory is infinite, His greatness boundless, His sublimity inconceivable, His might immeasurable, His wisdom unfathomable,

His goodness inimitable, His blessings ineffable."<sup>4</sup> St. Theophilus seems to be familiar also with Plato's teaching on the dichotomy, in God, of essence and energies (actions); it is only through actions, he maintains, that we can know the Divinity: "God is seen and known through His providence and actions."<sup>5</sup> He was also the first Christian writer to use the term "Trinity".

St. Theophilus takes issue with Plato on a number of points. First, he criticizes his faith in metempsychosis: "Does not Plato, who has so much to say about God's oneness and the immortality of the soul, contradict himself when he maintains that the souls of some move into the bodies of other people, and some souls are re-embodied in dumb animals."<sup>6</sup> Second, St. Theophilus takes exception to Plato's statement, in the *Laws*, concerning world history's "infinite multitude of years". In St. Theophilus's view, this implies an uncreated world, while he himself considers that "the total number of years since the creation of the world is 5.695".<sup>7</sup> Third, he attacks the Platonists' teaching on the eternity of matter: "Plato and his adherents recognize that God has no beginning and is the Father and Creator of everything; but then they assume that both God and matter have no beginning, and that matter is co-eternal with God. If God has no beginning and matter has no beginning, the Platonists think, then God is the Creator of all things. But if this be so, there is no room for God's absolute power, which they assume.... If God created the world out of pre-existing matter, is this a great feat? God's might is revealed in the fact that He created out of nothing."<sup>8</sup> Plato does indeed speak of matter as having existed before it was "touched" by God (*Timaeus*, 53b). Thus Plato indirectly asserts that matter is eternal. But he conceives of it as a principle governing the formation of ideas in a "different being", rather than as "pre-existing material". As for middle Platonism, it did in fact subscribe to the idea of eternal matter, with frequent references to Plato, in particular to the fact that in *Timaeus* he called the Maker of the world the Demiurge.

The works of St. Justin the Martyr offer far more material for comparison. These are, above all, the first chapters of his *Dialogue with Trypho*, and also the fragments from his *Second Apology*. Platonism prepared St. Justin for the conversion to Christianity: "Discourses on the supersensual elevated me ever higher, the doctrine on ideas inspiring my mind."<sup>9</sup>



Judging by St. Justin's *Second Apology*, Plato remained a great authority to him even after his conversion. "Plato's doctrine neither wholly differs from nor is absolutely identical with Christ's. The same applies to the teachings of others..., as each spoke excellently because he had, to some extent, come to know things related to God's sowed Word."<sup>10</sup>

St. Justin shared the Stoic view that the Logos, "suffusing" the Universe, was the rational foundation of the world. All humans, he taught, participated in the Logos, but only those attained spiritual summits who "found and contemplated" the Logos in its fulness, as revealed in Christ's God-manhood.

St. Justin describes his conversion to Christianity in his *Dialogue with Trypho*. Below we give a commentary by the modern French scholar Robert Joly to its individual chapters.

An old man says (in § 5,2) that if the world was created, the soul must have a beginning too. Hence it is not immortal, in the absolute sense, even though it does not die. St. Justin asks whether Plato, in *Timaeus*, was not saying the same thing about the cosmos, which, according to Plato, was subject to destruction but would not be destroyed unless God willed it. Hildal, another scholar, justly points out that St. Justin takes the passage from *Timaeus* out of context and, like the Platonist Atticus, gives it a cosmological interpretation (i. e., what Plato says about the lower gods, is attributed by St. Justin to the cosmos). Let us quote this passage from *Timaeus* (41, a-d): "The Parent of the Universe addresses them (the gods—*Ed.*) as follows: 'Gods of gods! I am your Demiurge and the Father of things, and what comes into being from Me shall persist indestructibly, for such is My will.... Having once emerged, you shall not be absolutely immortal or indestructible, and yet you shall not have to suffer destruction or meet death, for My verdict shall be to you an even stronger and more enduring link than those which, at your emergence, formed the body of each of you into a unity.... Complete the creation of living beings yourselves linking the mortal with the immortal, then provide sustenance for them, feed and raise them, and receive them unto yourselves after death.'" It must be noted that the gods the Demiurge addresses are luminaries, so one should not exaggerate the originality of St. Justin's exegesis: the cosmological interpretation is quite legitimate in this case.

So what does St. Justin say about the soul? "God alone is without a beginning and indestructible, and it is for this reason that He is God. All that comes after Him has a beginning and is subject to destruction. This is precisely why souls are mortal and condemned to punishment. For were they without a beginning, they would not sin or be tainted with stupidity, or be now timid and now impertinent, or settle in the bodies of pigs, snakes or dogs on their own free will; nor could they be forced to do this—precisely because they would be without a beginning."

Let us compare this with what the middle Platonists

say about the soul. Those Platonists who maintained that the world was eternal, logically attributed eternity to the soul too (Albinus). On the other hand, Atticus, who believed that the world had a beginning, at the same time maintained that the soul was immortal, and considered this proposition the cornerstone of Platonism. (Plato says in *Phaedrus*: "every soul is immortal" (245 c) and "the soul is unborn and immortal" (246 a). Atticus heatedly argued that Aristotle agreed with him on this point. Of course, he would not have displayed such fervour, if this were commonly acknowledged by the Platonists. St. Justin's words ("in the opinion of some Platonists") suggest that there was no such unanimity.

In § 6 we read that the soul is not life, but only participates in life. For this is what God wants. "The soul does not live because it is life, but because it participates in life, and that which participates in something is different from the thing it participates in." This theory probably rests on the passage in *Timaeus* in which the Parent of the Universe tells the lower gods: "If creatures are formed and endowed with life by Me, they will be equal to gods. Therefore, for them to be mortal... apply yourselves, in accordance with your nature, to the creation of living beings.... And it is fitting that there should be present something synonymous to the immortal ones, something called the divine principle." So, according to *Timaeus*, mortal creatures participate in life via the lower gods.

The theory of St. Justin's old man is a bold exegesis of this proposition of Plato's: if Plato holds that it is God's will to endow the souls with immortality, the old man believes God may also wish to take away immortality from some souls. The old man may have been inspired by the passage in Revelation concerning the second, spiritual death (Rev. 20.14).

As regards the very use of the term "Participation" (μέθεξις) and the distinction between that which participates and that participated in, here Plato's influence is undeniable. We need only quote one sentence from the *Sophistes* (259 a): "other things, participating in being, exist thanks to this participation, even though they are not identical with what they participate in, but different."

In addition to what has been said by Robert Joly, we would like to point out a few other Platonic ideas in St. Justin. "The Divinity cannot be seen with the eyes like other living beings. As Plato says, it can only be apprehended with the mind.... According to Plato, we can contemplate with our mind's eye, when it is clear, that truly existing entity which is the source of everything we apprehend with the mind and which has neither colour, form, size or any other quality visible to the eye, but is a Being, identical to itself, superior to any essence, ineffable, inexpressible, whole and beautiful and beneficent, and unexpectedly manifested in noble souls due to their affinity to It and their desire to witness It."<sup>12</sup> In the *Second Apology* St. Justin quotes (like many other early Christian writers, such as Clement, Lactantius, Minucius Felix and Origen) this passage from *Timaeus*: "It is neither



easy to find the Father and Creator of everything nor, once found, is it safe to proclaim Him to everyone."<sup>13</sup> St. Justin clearly inclines towards apophatism. Here is a proposition from the *Second Apology* which strikingly expresses this tendency: "The Father of everything, the unborn, has no definite name. As for the words Father, God, Creator, Lord, Sovereign—these are not names but designations derived from His good deeds and works.... God is not a name either; it is the thought of something inexpressible implanted in the human nature."<sup>14</sup>

Further we find in St. Justin a critique of Plato's theory of metempsychosis. Judging by his *Dialogue*, St. Justin adhered to this doctrine prior to his conversion. He puts a sharp critique of it into the mouth of the old man who reveals to him the true faith. The old man argues against the transmigration of souls as follows: it does not benefit the soul, because in its new body the soul does not remember how it contemplated God when it was disembodied, nor does it remember the sins for which it was condemned to the new incarnation. Hence "one cannot assume that they are punished if they are unaware of the punishment. And so, souls do not pass into other bodies, for otherwise they would know that they were thus punished and would then be fearful of committing even the slightest sin."<sup>15</sup>

Views on the theological heritage of Clement of Alexandria vary widely to this day. For instance, analysts ask themselves whether he was a mystic. "In the opinion of some", Megas Farantos writes, "Clement's praises for gnosis place him among the mystical theologians ('intellectual mysticism'). Others hold that although Clement's works do represent a stage in the development of Christian mysticism, Clement was not a mystic, just as Plato was not a Neoplatonist, although Neoplatonism is based on his teaching. In fact, Clement's influence was very considerable. He is believed to have had an impact on Origen and also on later theologians and mystics, especially on Sts. Nilus of Sinai, Evagrius Ponticus and Maximus the Confessor. As for Clement himself, the influence exerted on him by Platonism and pagan mysteries has not been sufficiently studied, so that it remains a question to what extent the mystical trends in his writings are traceable to pre-Christian influences and to what extent they stem from the New Testament. However, in the unanimous opinion of scholars, it was in large measure thanks to Clement that Neoplatonic blood flows so amply in the veins of Christian theology."<sup>16</sup>

For all his eclecticism and borrowing of philosophical ideas, Clement was an essentially Christian thinker. The German scholar Blumenkamp demonstrates this by comparing Clement's anthropology with that of Philo and Numenius. It is not a question of a dichotomy or trichotomy here (Clement has statements of both kinds) but of his attitude to corporeity, which Platonism, despite all reservations, considers a source of evil. Clement takes a different view. Blumenkamp says: "Clement does not oppose the

soul to the body. Neither is the soul good by nature nor is the body evil by nature, but the two are 'adiaphora' (matters having no moral merit or demerit)." The positive attitude to the body is especially significant against the background of the contemporary philosophical trends which took a negative view of it and preached withdrawal from the world. Philo attributed all evil to the body. In his opinion, there exists an abyss between the Divinity and matter. God is absolutely transcendental and can only influence the world through a mediator, the Logos. In Clement, metaphysical arguments concerning the Logos play a secondary role. The Logos is above all the Saviour, Who takes on a human form and hence assumes a body. Apart from that, God in Clement is both transcendental and immanent. Consequently, the positive attitude to corporeity stems both from a different vision of God and from the teaching on God's incarnation. Indicative too is a comparison with the Neoplatonist Numenius, a great contemporary of Clement's. Numenius coined this dictum, quoted by Clement: "What is Plato but an Attic-speaking Moses?" (Like Philo, Aristobulus and Clement, Numenius derived Greek philosophy from Judaic wisdom.) Numenius considered that the evil which had taken possession of the soul was due to "what had been added to the soul from without." This formula was current among the Platonists of that period. To Numenius and Cronus this extraneous element was matter altogether, to Harpocration—the immediate body. All three regarded the soul's connection with the body as something negative.<sup>17</sup>

Clement's positive view of corporeity goes hand in hand with a critical attitude to the Platonic idea of the pre-existence of the soul. In Clement's opinion, the cosmos, being God's creation, is good, and reducing the soul from a better condition to a worse one would be incompatible with God's goodness. Elsewhere Clement criticizes the Gnostic Basilides: "Basilides proceeds from the erroneous view that the soul is punished here for sins committed in its former life. But this assumption is contradicted by, among other things, the existence of free will in man" (*Stromaties*, 4, 83, 2; 4, 85, 3). Here too we see Clement's Biblical orientation prevail over his Platonic sympathies.

Speaking of God-knowledge, Clement, like the Platonists and Philo, distinguishes between God's unknowable, inexpressible essence and His actions. He says: "In His essence God is far away, for how can the created approach the uncreated? But in His might, by which He contains in Himself everything, He is quite near."<sup>18</sup> And in another place he says: "By its nature, man's word is too weak to enunciate God. I do not mean His essence (for speaking of it is quite impossible) but God's might and creativeness."<sup>19</sup> Clement also uses the well-known Neoplatonic formula which says that in cognizing God we get to know "not what He is but what He is not."

Professor V. Bolotov points out that "in his concept of God the Creator Clement starts out from the



determination of God as a 'good Monad'. 'Good' is the purest, non-relative determination of God, and it logically precedes His determination as the Creator. It was precisely because He was good that He conceived the desire to be Creator and Father."<sup>20</sup> Thus Clement, in perfect harmony with Neoplatonism, considers God's goodness to have been the cause of the creation of the world.

But Clement speaks of God not only as a unity, but also as a trinity of Persons. He quotes Plato's cryptic words: "Everything is drawn to the King of everything, and everything takes place for His sake, He is the Cause of everything beautiful. The second is drawn to the second, the third to the third."<sup>21</sup> Clement interprets this as a reference to the Most Holy Trinity. "The third is the being of the Holy Spirit, and the second is that of the Son."<sup>22</sup> Clement's triadology is not very clear. As Megas Farantos points out, "Clement sometimes identifies the Holy Spirit with the Logos, saying 'the Spirit was incarnated' (*Paedagogus*, I, VI, I). Elsewhere he calls the Holy Spirit 'Christ's Mind' (*Stromaties*, V, 4). But very often he distinguishes between the Holy Spirit and the Logos. Clement places the Holy Spirit mostly in a soteriological context: It is sent by God, operates in the souls and bodies of saints and brings about a rebirth in Christ."<sup>23</sup> Referring to Clement's triadology, Prof. Bolotov points to the unequal status (subordinationism) of the Father and the Son: "According to Clement, the Word-Son is God's Wisdom, Knowledge, Truth, Idea, Thought. But the Word as he describes it, lacks the unqualified simplicity we find in his description of the Father. The Son is neither an unqualified unity nor a plurality, in the sense of a compound of parts; He is the 'All-One' and hence 'all.' For He is the circle of all the powers united in Him, and hence, 'the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end' (*Stromaties*, IV, 25). This concept has features resembling Plotinus, although its immediate source may have been Plato."<sup>24</sup> Bolotov means the following statement in *Aeneades* (V, 1, 8): "Parmenides, in Plato's dialogue of the same name, distinguishes between three principles: the One, the One-Many, the One and Many."

Finally, Clement gives considerable attention to the theme of becoming God-like. Plotinus and Philo said that through contemplating God man himself becomes "like God" (Plotinus) or "is called God by virtue of becoming God-like" (Philo). Clement, in expressing this idea, backs it up with a Biblical text, Psalm 82, in which Israel's judges are called, with a touch of irony, gods: *God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods* (Ps. 82.1). *I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High* (Ps. 82.6). Clement says: "Gnosis leads us to our infinite and perfect goal; it teaches us the kind of living in store for us—living with the gods and in harmony with God. We shall be pure in heart through the Lord's goodness, and restoration ('apocatastasis') for face-to-face eternal contemplation is awaiting us. We shall be called

gods and shall join the company of other gods."<sup>25</sup>

Let us note here that Clement does not derive becoming God-like from God's incarnation, as the later Church fathers usually do. According to him, becoming God-like is the result of perfect gnosis. But let us not overhastily reproach him with rationalism and susceptibility to extra-Christian influences. This idea of Clement's has a basis in the Bible, where it says that the Eternal Life consists in God-knowledge: *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom thou hast sent* (Jn. 17.3). Of course what is meant here is not purely intellectual cognition but knowledge in love. Now we find in Clement passages testifying precisely to such an understanding of gnosis: "Any intellectual quest is dubious and blind without the beneficial knowledge coming from God through the Son."<sup>26</sup> Apart from this, it follows from Clement's previous idea that gnosis does not immediately lead to the contemplation of God, but first results in purity of the heart, i. e., impassiveness. And according to the Gospel, those pure in heart will see God. Significantly, too, Clement—in contrast to Philo and Plotinus—places becoming God-like into an eschatological context, seeing it in reference to the Future Life. The term "apocatastasis" as used by Clement is free from the negative connotations subsequently imparted to it by Origenism. In Clement, none of Origen's ideas attach to it; in this sense it is neutral. The context suggests that it means the restoration, beyond earthly life, of the lost union with God.

Of course, according to Clement, the Gnostic gets to know God even in his bodily state, but he does so, as it were, from a distance, as if through a mirror; not "face to face", but solely "by a pure, extra-bodily soaring of the mind."<sup>27</sup> Just as Apostle Paul puts it: *Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known* (1 Cor. 13.12). Displayed in this orientation towards the future life, towards God's Kingdom, is Clement's Christian outlook, and the image of the Gnostic reproduced by him assumes eschatological features again.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> St. Theophilus of Antioch, "Epistle to Autolycus", Vol. 5.—In: *Early Christian Fathers of the Church*, Brussels, 1978.

<sup>2</sup> Plato, "Laws", 897. *Works*, In Three Vols., Moscow, 1972; Vol. 3, Part 2, p. 393.

<sup>3</sup> St. Theophilus of Antioch, *op. cit.*, 1, 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 5.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 7.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 28.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 4.

<sup>9</sup> St. Justin the Martyr.—In: *Early Christian Fathers of the Church*, p. 259.

<sup>10</sup> St. Justin, "Second Apology", 13.—*Ibid.*, p. 359.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Joly, *Christianisme et philosophie. Etudes sur Justin et les apologistes grecs*, Bruxelles, 1973, pp. 56-63.

<sup>12</sup> St. Justin the Martyr, "Dialogue with Trypho the Jew", 4.—In: *The Works of St. Justin the Philosopher*, Moscow, 1864, p. 150.



<sup>13</sup> Plato, "Timaeus". *Works*, In Three Vols., Moscow, 1977, Vol. 3, Part I, p. 469.

<sup>14</sup> St. Justin, "Second Apology", 6.—In: *Early Christian Fathers of the Church*, pp. 350-351.

<sup>15</sup> St. Justin the Martyr, "Dialogue with Trypho the Jew".—In: *The Works of St. Justin the Philosopher*, p. 151.

<sup>16</sup> Farantos M., *Die Gerechtigkeit bei Klemens von Alexandrien*, Bonn 1972, pp. 14-15.

<sup>17</sup> Blumenkamp P., *Klemens von Alexandrien und Basilius der Grosse*, Köln 1958, pp. 12-14.

<sup>18</sup> Clement of Alexandria, *Stromaties*. Yaroslavl, 1892, II, 5.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, V, II.

<sup>20</sup> Prof. V. Bolotov. *Origen's Teaching on the Holy Trinity*, St. Petersburg, 1879, pp. 80-81.

<sup>21</sup> Plato, "Second Epistle to Dionysius."—*Works*, Vol. 3, Part 2, p. 511.

<sup>22</sup> *Stromaties*, V, 14.

<sup>23</sup> Farantos, M., *Op. cit.*, p. 104.

<sup>24</sup> V. Bolotov., *Op. cit.*, p. 79.

<sup>25</sup> *Stromaties*, VII, 10.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 12.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 11.

Deacon GEORGY ZYABLITSEV

## CHRONICLE

The "Muehlheim-4" Symposium. The fourth session of the Soviet-German club of intellectual rapprochement between the two peoples, known as the "Muehlheim Initiative", was held in Moscow on November 18-22, 1990. The club was constituted two years ago as a result of mutual agreement between the Muehlheim Evangelical Academy, Bonn University and the *Literaturnaya Gazeta*. Among members of the club there are prominent religious figures, representatives of culture, science, mass media and the financial world. The club promotes initiatives in the sphere of culture, science, economics and charity which are of great moment to the development of Soviet-German relations. The current session was held under the motto: "Europe after the unification of Germany". Questions under discussion included: Germany in the context of Europe—problems of security and cooperation, the sorrowful jubilee of the 50th anniversary of Germany's attack on the Soviet Union, the role and prospects of economic relations between the two countries, promotion of humanitarian relations, ecological problems, Soviet Germans. The Russian Orthodox Church was represented by Archbishop Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Head of the Department for External Church Relations, Archpriest Aleksandr Kozha, staff member of the Department, chief of the inter-religious ties sector, Archpriest Mikhail Peregudov of the Yaroslavl Diocese, and Father Georgy Bakirkhodzhayev, teacher at the Stavropol Theological Seminary.

Delegation from Korea. A delegation of the National Council of Churches in Korea and the Korean Bible Society, headed by the Rev. Kim So Young, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Department of the NCCK, was on a visit to Moscow on November 22-24, 1990. The delegation was received by Archbishop Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, Head of the Department for External Church Relations. The parties exchanged opinions on problems pertaining to the relations between the Churches in Korea and the Russian Orthodox Church. Besides, in connection with the campaign launched in Korea to collect money for printing 200,000 copies of the Bible in Russian for the needs of the Russian Orthodox Church, the guests had a talk with Hieromonk Ioann Ekonomtsev, Deputy Head of the DECR,

and Hegumen Innokenty Pavlov, Secretary of the Patriarchal and Synodal Bible Commission.

Visit by the Secretary of the Archbishop of Canterbury. On December 5, 1990, Hieromonk Ioann Ekonomtsev, Deputy Head of the Department for External Church Relations, received Canon Stephen Pletten, Secretary of the Archbishop of Canterbury on ecumenic problems, who arrived in the Soviet Union on a private visit. In the course of their talk they touched on questions of bilateral cooperation of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Church of England, particularly in the sphere of Christian charity and enlightenment as well as of publishing activity. V. Chukalov, staff member of the DECR, took part in the discussion.

Session of the Joint Committee of the PSBC and the UBS. The session of the Joint Committee of the Patriarchal and Synodal Bible Commission [PSBC] and the United Bible Societies (UBS) was held at the Department for External Church Relations on December 20, 1990. On the part of the PSBC the session was attended by its members: Archimandrite Iannuary Ivliev and Hegumen Innokenty Pavlov and the Commission's executive secretary K. Logachev. On the part of the UBS the session was attended by Mr. Terje Hartberg, publishing consultant for Europe and the Middle East, Dr. Manuel Jinbasha, the translations consultant for Europe and the Middle East, and Deacon Mikhail Roshak, a newly appointed representative of the UBS in Moscow. Invitations to take part in the session were received by Father Sergiy Ovsyannikov of the Hague-Netherlands Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church and by the delegation of the Bible Societies of the Nordic Countries staying in Moscow at the time. The session discussed trends of cooperation of the PSBC and the UBS in such spheres as the publication of *The Bible for Children* in Russian, technical aid to the PSBC on the part of the UBS in the realization of its projects of working on the Russian text of the Bible, conducting a sociological investigation of the attitude to the Bible in the USSR, organization of a joint seminar on biblical translations into East Slavonic languages in Minsk in January 1991; concerted work to promote the translation of the Bible into the Chuvash language and into the languages of the Finno-Ugrian peoples living in Russia.



## Hans Erenberg: The Orthodox Have Brought Love

Prof. Dr. Hans Erenberg may be described as a philosopher and a theologian interested in politics, and advocate of ecumenism, a zealous pastor and a preacher among the dispossessed, an ideological opponent of Nazism and a victim of its racist politics, an adherent of the "European Idea" and an opponent of the cold war trend in the young FRG of the Adenauer times.

Erenberg's life is a key to the understanding of the wide scope of his thinking and activity. It becomes clear why it was so important for him to build bridges between faith and reason, between ecclesiastical and political life and, last but not least, between the confessional forms of Christianity. And so what was Hans Erenberg?

He was born in 1883 in Hamburg into a Jewish family, assimilated but not Christianized. In 1902 he was matriculated and in 1906 became Doctor of Engineering Sciences. A year later, after serving in the army as a volunteer (1906-1907) in Kassel, he became interested in philosophy which took him to Heidelberg where he became Doctor of Philosophy in 1909 and a year later was given the post of privat-docent at the Department of Philosophy of Heidelberg University.

In this period he turned to religion for the first time and zealously studied German idealism. In 1914 Erenberg was called up for active service as an army officer, and served till 1918. Even before the war he was extraordinary professor of philosophy at Heidelberg University.

His interest in religion revived; he became converted to Christianity and it changed his life radically—the university professor came to study theology in order to become a priest and devote himself entirely to the service of the Church.

After passing his examinations in 1923-1924 he was ordained pastor on the Sunday following Pentecost, and a year later he was appointed parish priest in Bochum. At the same time he did not stop lecturing at Heidelberg University till 1933 when the Nazis made him resign from the post because of his Jewish origin. After a brief "protective arrest" in 1937 he was forced to quit his pastorship and in September 1938 leave the parish.

Following the pogrom of November 9, 1938, he was arrested and up to March 1939 he was in the concentration camps of Oranienburg and Sachsenhausen. To avoid further persecution a month after he was

set free, Erenberg left Germany and emigrated to England where he worked for the World Council of Churches. In 1940 he was interned in Hightown, a suburb of Liverpool, Great Britain. After the war ended he began his ministry again, first in the camp of German POWs in England and upon returning to his country in 1947, he worked for the Westphalian Missionary Society. Then in 1952-1953 he worked independently for suburban social groups of the Randmission and the Edermannaktion in the land of Northern Rhine-Westphalia.

### Interest in the Orthodox East

In his introductory lecture given at Berlin University at the beginning of the summer semester of 1927, the well-known Bulgarian theologian, Archpriest Stefan Tsankov, witnessed to the fact that "in recent years sincere and deep interest in the Orthodox East was awakening in the Protestant world, and much was expected from it in the future for the development of Christianity"<sup>2</sup>.

Among those who inspired Tsankov with optimism to the effect was a German pastor from Bochum, Hans Erenberg. And indeed, the study of the works of Erenberg proves that in his estimation Tsankov was quite right. Few among Evangelical theologians studied for so long and as actively the spiritual significance of Eastern Christianity, elucidating the kind of contribution that could be made by Orthodoxy to pan-Christian dialogue.

Orthodoxy for Erenberg was a component part of Christianity, moreover, such as could give much to others; he himself thus wrote about it: "At the first encounter of Orthodoxy with world Protestantism the Orthodox brought love. In the preparation of the common meal they were the salt. They gave blessing without thralldom and tradition without coercion".<sup>3</sup> He said this bearing in mind the World Conference of Churches held in 1925 in Stockholm which was attended by representatives of the Local Churches of Constantinople, Alexandria, Bulgaria (among them Archpriest Dr. Stefan Tsankov), Greece, Serbia, and Rumania; the Orthodox delegation<sup>4</sup> was headed by Pope and Patriarch Photius of Alexandria († 1925)<sup>5</sup>, who, in the official report of the conference, is called "successor to the thousand-year-old Holy Tradition of the Church of Jesus Christ, a confessor inspiring

deep respect, who has united Stockholm with Nicaea".<sup>6</sup>

The thought which, to a great extent, determined Erenberg's interest in Eastern Christianity was that Protestantism had lost the Christian Tradition, had lost contact with the Early Christian and Early Church heritage, which must be restored, particularly with the help of the Orthodox Church.

If one was to ask at what period of his many-sided activities did Erenberg show interest in the Orthodox Church, one might say that the first personal contacts were made before World War I when he became interested in religion, that is, after he received his doctor's degree in 1909 and at the start of his work as privatdocent at the Department of Philosophy of Heidelberg University after 1910. Although there are no indications in Erenberg's publications of those years that he had been studying Eastern Christianity, particularly the Russian, nevertheless, personal contacts, some of which lasted even into the period after his emigration, were established in those years.

At that time in Heidelberg there formed a rather heterogeneous society of Russian students<sup>7</sup>, the "philosophical" section of which consisted of students of the once well-known neo-Kantian, Wilhelm Windelband (1848-1915). Prominent among them were three Russian philosophers, who had won their doctor's degrees together with Erenberg-S. Gessen (1887-1959), F. Stepun (1884-1965), and N. Bubnov.

The latter influenced Erenberg's position the most in the future; he was bound to Erenberg not only by ties of friendship but by those of fruitful scholarship. First of all Erenberg owes to him his acquaintance with Russian religious philosophy, especially in respect of the language, because, despite his active study of Russia, Erenberg was not very good in the Russian language. His friendship with N. Bubnov and F. Stepun survived Erenberg's forced exile.

Here a brief biography of Nikolai Bubnov should be given. He was born on January 7, 1883, in St. Petersburg into the family of a famous physician and the Privy Councillor<sup>8</sup>, Dr. N. Bubnov (1851-1884); his mother, née Türrstig, was German. His Father was an Orthodox. Nikolai studied at the First Classic Gymnasium in St. Petersburg, and from 1898 to 1902 at the university of the capital. After passing the state examinations he continued his studies at the universities of Leipzig, Heidelberg, and Freiburg; as a student of Windelband, he received his doctor's degree in Heidelberg in 1908 and in 1911 was made docent of the University's Department of Philosophy. In 1921 he received German citizenship and in 1924 he became first a non-staff and then staff extraordinary professor at the Higher School of Economics in Mannheim and remained honorary professor at Heidelberg University. It was at that time that his constant collaboration with Erenberg began.

In this connection due must be given to the ecumenical conceptions of Hans Erenberg in the most fruitful period of his scholarly life for they exerted a deep influence upon his interest in religion, his conversion

to Christianity. His conceptions are typical today too.

The first publication in which Erenberg speaks directly of Eastern Christianity, i. e. the Orthodox Church, was a philosophico-theological work, a sketch of "ecclesiological and historical theology", in which, in conformity with the terminology of Schelling and Fichte, the new historical epoch was defined as John's Christianity. We are speaking of the book published in 1920, "The Return of the Heretic"<sup>10</sup>.

It is known on authority that Erenberg was acquainted with the work of Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy (1888-1973), published a year earlier. The author of the book took the division of the Church in 1054 and the working out of the canon law in the Roman Catholic Church as his starting point for his periodization of Church history.<sup>11</sup>

Somewhat similarly Erenberg defines the typological structure of the preceding epochs, ascribing the stages in Church history to diverse Christian confessions. Then he differentiates Peter's Church of Rome and Paul's Church of Wittenberg, which is preceded by the Eastern Church, that is, the Byzantine, which remains the eternal symbol of the Early Church.

### **"The Preservation of Spiritual Strength"**

Thus Byzantium became the centre of Christian ecumenism, of which two other Churches were in great need: "Rome, without the light from the East, will decline, and Wittenberg will collapse. Byzantium is the true sceptre-bearer of Immortal Christ, the Cross of the heart in the East will never decay".<sup>12</sup>

True, the historically formed Eastern Church should not be identified with John's Church of the future; it is most likely that she will take her image through the history of the Christian Church of all three epochs, that is, the Early Church, embodied in Byzantium or Orthodoxy, then the allegedly Successor Church (Rome) and the Converted Church (Wittenberg).

At the same time Erenberg expects from the Eastern Church the preservation of spiritual strength so important in the new epoch, which the Church of the future cannot do without in the least.

In these arguments of Erenberg it is easy to perceive the historico-philosophical treatment of the story by Vladimir Soloviev, "About Anti-Christ" (from "Three Conversations"), and indeed, the influence of the Russian thinker is discernible in general, particularly that of his historical theology.<sup>13</sup>

Just as for Soloviev, the Eastern Church becomes for Erenberg a necessary structural element, even an irreplaceable and fundamental part of Christianity as a whole, which is clearly testified to by his publications at the beginning of the 1920s; it is that same Church of love and unity which he sees in the Russian religious philosophy and which captures him more and more. Wishing to acquaint others with it, Erenberg published together with Nikolai Bubnov in 1923 and 1925 two



large volumes entitled "Eastern Christianity"<sup>14</sup>, in which presented are the philosophers, thinkers and theologians of the 19th and 20th centuries, many of whom were translated into German for the first time.

Noteworthy is the fact that Erenberg and Bubnov included in their anthology several Russian thinkers. Thus in Volume I, called "Politics", we find works by Petr Chaadaev (1794-1856), Konstantin Aksakov (1817-1860), Aleksei Khomyakov (1804-1860), and Vladimir Soloviev (1853-1900), as well as practically unknown in Germany, Konstantin Leontiev (1831-1891), one of the later Slavophiles<sup>15</sup>. The translations were made directly from the Russian sources, and the authors are introduced in brief biographies. Even more striking is the selection of authors for Volume II which is entitled "Philosophy", but which comprises theological works, for instance, the famous work by the Russian theologian Khomyakov, "The Church Is One", which may be considered as the most popular exposition of the new Russian teaching on the sobornost of the Church in the 19th century.

Furthermore, we find there the works of Father Sergy Bulgakov (1871-1944) and of the Russian philosopher Lev Karsavin (1882-1925), well-known even before World War I, as well as of Nikolai Berdyaev (1874-1948).

The most prominent place is given to the work of Father Pavel Florensky (1882-1937), "The Pillar and Ground of the Truth".<sup>16</sup> In the brief biography of the author it is justly said: "The learning of Pavel Florensky in its diversity has no equal among his contemporaries: combined in his person are — mathematician, natural scientist, philologist, philosopher, theologian, archaeologist, mystic, poet, and historian — and in each of these fields he worked as an independent researcher on the basis of primary sources and made discoveries which became known, naturally, only to his closest friends".<sup>17</sup>

The latter circumstance has changed now since the publications of the Moscow Patriarchate and of the Russian émigré have made the works of this outstanding thinker and priest accessible<sup>18</sup>; now he is regarded with respect by the ecumenical circles as well.<sup>19</sup>

It is surprising indeed that after the publication in "Eastern Christianity", almost fifty years had to pass before the works of Father Pavel Florensky were published again, not only in translation, but in Russian as well.

This precisely helps best to estimate the service done by Bubnov and Erenberg to all who are studying Eastern Christianity and to ecumenical dialogue: in their work they were not satisfied with the repetition of the already known, but published the latest works too. They strove not only to widen the horizon of the readers, not for sterile study of the Eastern Church, but by acquainting the people with the Russian religious thought, they wanted to "fertilize" the West and revive inter-Church dialogue. And indeed both volumes of "Eastern Christianity" present authors who, by their works, showed that Orthodoxy can make

an invaluable contribution to inter-confessional dialogue.

Erenberg accompanies the texts in both volumes with striking commentaries in the form of detailed afterwords, partly very subjective, nevertheless (or perhaps due to this) very interesting. In them he again advances the well-known thesis that salvation to Europe being left to its own resources can come only from Eastern Christianity. Only on this condition may the forms established by Rome and Wittenberg be overcome geographically, forms in which the history of Christianity has stopped, inasmuch as "The East as heir to Christian antiquity is not only nearer to the origins of Christianity than we are, but possesses absolutely different primordial powers... Through Eastern Christianity Western Christianity is again granted a clean conscience for life and reflection... A new epoch for Christianity is beginning"<sup>20</sup>.

Erenberg comes to the conclusion that thanks to the involvement of Orthodoxy in Christian dialogue, which is now becoming a trilateral discussion, there is a change in relations between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism, since the element of love has been introduced: "It turns out one can live even under the evil of Church schism"<sup>21</sup>.

Remarkable is the fact that this idea of Erenberg's coincides with the thesis of Henrich Fries and Karl Raner on uniting the Churches, especially with the 6th Thesis: "All Churches (meaning former and present confessions) live in mutual brotherly exchange, concerning all spheres of life, so that the former history and experience of the once divided Churches may be effectively used in the life of all Churches".<sup>22</sup>

Erenberg elaborates these ideas in his commentaries to Volume II; the commentaries are headed "Russification of Europe, or the Question of Triunity", and is a continuation of the afterword to Volume I.<sup>23</sup> Here Erenberg criticizes severely his Church: "Her Orthodoxy has proved pseudo-Orthodoxy", he says.<sup>24</sup>

Erenberg, however, does not just enumerate "heresies" the gravest of which he considers the loss of true faith in the Holy Trinity, since God is regarded as an abstraction; Christ is humanized, and the Holy Spirit—individualized.

He points out to the Evangelical Church, which he chose for himself and in which he was ordained priest, the way to ecumenical community, because "from the Evangelical Church just as from the other, we cannot by ourselves come to the true teaching in strength and Spirit; cannot return to the living cogency of the Word; it is possible only in the Universal Church (Gesamtkirche), in which each Church must attain resurrection in the Holy Spirit"<sup>25</sup>.

The first witnesses and proclaimers of this Universal Church are, according to him, the Russian thinkers, whom he presents here. In his view their works become component elements of the "ecumenical trend" which should not be estimated and understood from the point of view of organization" from which "grow new Orthodox thinking, more Orthodox than Papal

theology which is originally imbued with a mediative spirit, more Orthodox than the pseudo-Orthodox theology of Protestantism"<sup>26</sup>

If all Christians accept their views on the essence of the Church then, as Erenberg considers, a new understanding of Christian confessions will be born, an understanding which will act as a uniting and not disuniting power: "We shall be super-confessional, not being extra-confessional..."

"Individual Churches will not lose their power because of this, but will increase it owing to the universal breadth gained by merging with the universality of the Holy Spirit."<sup>27</sup>

What Erenberg describes here is still in a perspective of ecumenism, nevertheless, it is a convincing and topical prototype of Church community; it coincides with the present Orthodox ecclesiological view of the Church as "unity in diversity" in which various forms of the One Church of Christ enjoy equal rights, being unanimously bound by love and confessing a common faith.

### Perspective Ecclesiology

As Erenberg indicated with perspicacity, it is from hence that the great significance of Orthodox ecclesiology springs for present-day ecumenical dialogue among separated Christians, since "the structure of the conciliar community of Orthodoxy, representing a community of Churches with different traditions, has a great ecumenical value, for the desired unity of the divided Churches cannot be achieved either by 'returning to the bosom of the Mother Church or by a mechanical union of confessional fellowships, but only by the Community of Local Churches in love, when each keeps its own tradition and when in each another recognizes the same Church of Christ.'"<sup>29</sup>

Very recently the recognized, and sufficiently grounded by Erenberg, the ecumenical principle of Orthodox ecclesiology has found response in the Roman Catholic Church in the above-mentioned theses of H. Fries and K. Renner: "In the One Church of Jesus Christ consisting of united Churches, there are regional Churches, which may keep their habitual structure... In their Union the Churches will acquire comprehensive catholicity, if only their independence is not touched... The Catholic understanding of the true unity of Churches presumes the possibility, even the necessity, of a plurality of separate Churches with their own liturgics, order, and theology."<sup>30</sup>

Erenberg did not stop at the theoretical study of Eastern Christianity, but sought contact with its leading representatives. He wanted not only to speak of the Orthodox Church but to commune with her. That is why in 1924 he strove to establish correspondence with one of the most important, not to say the most brilliant, although very peculiar, theologians among the Russian émigrés, Archpriest Sergy Bulgakov. Father Sergy Bulgakov was humanly close to

Erenberg "the converted heretic", since they both, through the study of philosophy, had arrived at a conscious acceptance of Christianity and even at the service of the Church.

To his first letter, dated 1924, in which the primary question raised was that of the Bible and its importance for the Orthodox Church and which contained arguments on Stundism in Russia, Erenberg received an answer only three years later when Father Sergy had moved from Prague to Paris. In his letter Bulgakov comes directly to the essential question of his correspondent, formulating the attitude of Orthodoxy to the Bible: "For Eastern Orthodoxy biblicalism is not characteristic, since it is not a bookish religion, but a religion of a definite, continuous, mystic and mysterious action. The Bible is also a part of its content, but not as a book, but as a fact of mystic experience; the Bible... is part of divine service, the most Divine act, and there it is more than reading, it is the event read proper."<sup>32</sup>

That is why Father Sergy Bulgakov sees the positive side of the Evangelical Church in her devotion to the Bible, "where Protestantism is ecclesiastical, I would say it is Orthodox," and recognizes the historical necessity of the Reformation. "Historically the Reformation not only had a definite justification, but even a basis in the extremisms of papism: the poison of Reformation, the 'protest' were the reverse side of Catholicism; the reformers saved Christian 'freedom', but, regrettably, at an extremely high price."<sup>33</sup>

This high price was the loss of ecclesiasticity, it was what Erenberg was so distressed about in his afterword to Volume II of "Eastern Christianity".

Father Sergy Bulgakov sees clearly the manifestation of this in the use of the Bible by the Russian Stundists with their sectarian orientation: "The Bible becomes in their hands, terrible to say, dead and deadening, for the letter kills and the spirit gives life."

He sees only one way of restoring the spirit of ecclesiasticity: "Today the Reformation must save itself from Protestantism by returning to the Church, taking with it acquired and tested values, without aggravating Church destruction. Protestantism could find all its true values in Orthodoxy and preserve and strengthen its 'biblicism'. It would be a new spectral colour in the pleroma of Orthodoxy."<sup>34</sup>

Erenberg answered Father Sergy Bulgakov's letter at length, it reflected the limited ecumenical range of the author, since the weak side of Hans Erenberg, as he himself admitted, was ignorance of the real life of Orthodoxy.

He tries to circumvent it and when he speaks about it he does it without due accenting, by the way, as for instance in the treatise on Confirmation<sup>35</sup>, in which mention is made of the practice in the Eastern Church, but nothing is said of the rite, meaning, and theological significance, of the Sacrament of Chrismation in the Orthodox Church; moreover, its special character or function is not admitted, which, according to the theoretical estimate of the author, should



be expected of the Eastern Church.

It should be noted further that Erenberg from the very beginning identified this Eastern Church exclusively with Russian Christianity. Undoubtedly it was revealed to him through Russian friends and acquaintances in Heidelberg.

While the spiritual world of Russian religious philosophers and thinkers-Slavophiles, especially F. Dostoevsky (1821-1881) was dear and near to him, real life of the Orthodox Church was little known to him. Speaking of Eastern Christianity, he had in mind the speculative image rather than its divine service, Sacraments, and so on. That is why something essential in the spirituality of the Orthodox Church remained hidden from him — above all, the entire liturgical theology and hymnographical expression of conviction.

Characteristic is the fact that Erenberg never adduces even the shortest citation from the Orthodox liturgical poetry. And yet it was the spring from which the Russian thinkers, so estimated by Erenberg, drew inspiration; thinkers who are considered representatives of Orthodox spirituality.

This is especially true of Father Pavel Florensky: no small part of his works, above all the well-known "Moscow Lectures" of May-June 1918 (just as his later works, including his "Iconostasis", 1921-1922), are devoted precisely to philosophical evaluation of divine service.<sup>36</sup>

However, in spite of this criticism, Erenberg's approach to ecumenism remains promising; on the basis of this approach he examined confessional questions and found the following solutions: for the establishment of the desired Christian community the existing confessional divisions must be overcome, and their boundaries crossed in "mutual giving and receiving".

Thus Erenberg drew from his communion and discussions with eminent Russian religious thinkers, a new principle of relationship between Christian confessors and became a keen champion of earlier ecumenism, and his legacy awaits investigators. One who considers seriously his afterwords to "Eastern Christianity", may draw from them a categorical imperative for ecumenical activity.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See I. Chader. *Power and Sincerity. For the 70th Birthday of Hans Erenberg*. Heidelberg, 1953.

<sup>2</sup> S. Tsankov. *Orthodox Christianity of the East: Its Essence and Its Modern Aspect*. Berlin, 1928, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> H. Erenberg "The Spirit of Stockholm." *Christian World*, 1925, No. 40/41; p. 880.

<sup>4</sup> See list of delegates in the Orthodox group. In the bk. A. Deissmann. "The Stockholm World Church Conference (official report)." Berlin, 1926, p. 51.

<sup>5</sup> His Beatitude Photius passed away on his way home on September 5, 1925, in Zurich, in "the city of Zwingli" as the papers said reporting of his death.

<sup>6</sup> A. Deissmann. *Op. cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> See: F. Stepun. *The Past and the Intransient (1884-1914)*. Munich, 1947, part I, p. 120.

<sup>8</sup> Since his father belonged to the 2nd degree in the table of ranks, Nikolai in German was "Nicholas von Bubnoff".

<sup>9</sup> See: S. Yuzhakov. *The Big Encyclopaedia*. St. Petersburg, 1902, Vol. III, col. 789.

<sup>10</sup> H. Erenberg. *The Return of the Heretic — the Indicator of the Way*. Würzburg, 1920.

<sup>11</sup> O. Rozenschток-Husse. "The Epochs of Canon Law." Holland, 1919, No. 2, pp. 64-78.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>13</sup> See: I. Samsonov. "The Unity of Mankind. On the Historical Theology of V. Soloviev." *Stimme der Orthodoxie*, 1980, No. 4, pp. 50-64.

<sup>14</sup> H. Erenberg. *N. von Bubnoff. Eastern Christianity. Documents*, Vol. I, *Politics*, Munich, 1923, Vol. II, *Philosophy*, München, 1925.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. I. Kologrivov. *From Hellas to Monasticism — the Life and Thoughts of Konstantin Leontiev*. Regensburg, 1948; Yu. Ivashko. *Konstantin Leontiev — His Life and Works*. Berne 1976.

<sup>16</sup> Father Pavel Florensky. *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth. Experience in Orthodox Theodicy in Twelve Letters*. Moscow, 1914.

<sup>17</sup> H. Erenberg. *N. von Bubnoff. Christianity*. Vol. II, p. 410.

<sup>18</sup> Regarding this question see: R. Ressler. "Florensky Acquired Anew by the Russian Church (bibliographical notes)."; P. Hauptmann "We Commit All Our Life to Christ Our Lord". In the bk. *Jubilee Anthology Dedicated to Feri von Lilienfeld*. Göttingen, 1982, pp. 446-458.

<sup>19</sup> See: H. Rupert "On the Light of Truth. 100th Birthday of P. Florensky." *Kerigma und Dogma*, 1982, No. 3, pp. 179-214.

<sup>20</sup> H. Erenberg. *N. von Bubnoff. Christianity*. Vol. I, p. 358.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 371.

<sup>22</sup> H. Fris, K. Raner, "The unity of the Church — Real Possibility". In the bk. *Discussional Questions*. Freiburg-Basel-Vienna, 1983, Vol. 100, p. 123.

<sup>23</sup> H. Erenberg. *N. von Bubnoff. Christianity*. Vol. II, p. 278.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 390.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 393.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 393.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. VI.

<sup>28</sup> See: N. Thon. "Unity in Diversity — the Church in the Light of Modern Orthodox Ecclesiology." *The Christian East*, 1983, Nos. 3-4, pp. 84-92.

<sup>29</sup> A. Kallis. "Orthodoxy: What Is It?" in the bk. *Orthodox Perspectives*. Mainz, 1979, Vol. I, p. 86.

<sup>30</sup> H. Fris, K. Ranner. *Op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>31</sup> Correspondence (in Russian) *Puť*. Paris, 1926, No. 5, October, November.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>35</sup> H. Erenberg. *On Confirmation*. Bielefeld, 1951.

<sup>36</sup> See: Pavel Florensky. *Theological Studies*. Moscow, 1977, No. 17, pp. 85-248; P. Slezinsky "Philosophy of the Cult According to the Teaching of Pavel Florensky." *The Herald of Russian Christian Movement*. 1981, No. 135, Vol. III-IV, pp. 39-53.

NIKOLAUS THON

## The Act of the Constituent Assembly of the Chuvash Bible Commission

*Cheboksary  
March 1, 1991*

The meeting of the Cheboksary Diocesan Clergy chaired by the administrator of the Cheboksary Diocese, His Grace Archbishop Varnava, and with the participation, of the representative of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia, Executive Secretary of the Patriarchal and Synodal Bible Commission, K. Logachev, considered the need of the Chuvash people to have a complete translation of the Holy Scripture into the Chuvash language and resolved:

1. that the Chuvash Bible Commission be established at the Cheboksary Diocesan Administration under the chairmanship of His Grace Archbishop Varnava;

2. that included in the staff of the Chuvash Bible Commission be Archpriest Iliya Karlinov, Archpriest Gennady Antonov, Archpriest Ioann Ashmarin, Archpriest Grigory Medvedev, Archpriest Aleksandr Mikhailov, Father Petr Teplovodsky and Father Petr Philippov;

3. that considered necessary be the closest cooperation in the work between the Chuvash Bible Commission and the Patriarchal and Synodal, Byelorussian and North-Western Bible commissions on the basis of principles set out in the introductory speech of His Holiness Patriarch Aleksy II of Moscow and All Russia delivered on October 15, 1990, at the opening of the first general assembly of the Patriarchal and Synodal Bible Commission, and the principles set out in the joint statement of the Patriarchal and Synodal, Byelorussian and North-Western Bible commissions on October 15, 1990, and approved by the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, and that a proposal be submitted to the Patriarchal and Synodal, Byelorussian and North-Western Bible commissions to create a joint coordinating council of the Bible commissions of the Russian Orthodox Church;

4. that greeted with fraternal love be the cooperation with the Chuvash Bible Commission by representatives of other Christian confessions in the work of translating the Bible into the Chuvash language taking into account the specific requirements of individual confessions for the translations;

5. that, jointly with the Patriarchal and Synodal, Byelorussian and North-Western commissions and in the common interests of all Bible commissions of the Russian Orthodox Church, fraternal cooperation be developed in biblical work with the Federation of Bible Societies and other Bible organizations aboard on the basis of an Orthodox approach to the Bible studies;

6. that the Chuvash socio-cultural centre and individual experts in the Chuvash language, Chuvash literature and ethnography, be asked to cooperate with the Chuvash Bible Commission in the work of preparing and publishing the Books of the Holy Scriptures in Chuvash, and that great satisfaction be expressed with the decision of the management of the Chuvash socio-cultural centre to unite the commission earlier formed at the centre on translating the Bible into Chuvash and the Chuvash Bible Commission, and with the readiness of secular experts, in their work over the Bible translations into Chuvash, to take fully into account the ecclesiastical approach to the Bible and the requirements of the Russian Orthodox Church;

7. that the priority task of the Chuvash Bible Commission be the completion of the translation into Chuvash of the Pentateuch, and that the translators use the translations made from the Church-Slavonic texts of the Pentateuch with the aid of the Greek text of the Septuagint following the tradition of the outstanding Chuvash Bible translator and enlightener, Ivan Yakovlev.

*(signatures of commission members)*



## Questions and Answers

Q. What are panikhida, litiyá and funeral service which are held in connection with the death of our dear ones?

A. The word "panikhida", derived from the Greek means all-night vigil. The name testifies to the antiquity of this order of prayer: in the first centuries of Christianity, in the times of cruel persecutions, Christians said prayers for the dead at night and at dawn buried them, believing that the souls of the deceased ascended to the Lord, to the Eternal Kingdom of light, peace and bliss.

Panikhidas are said at home where the body of the deceased lies, in church, and by the graveside on the third, ninth and fortieth day after the death of a Christian, as well as on the anniversary of his death, his birthday and name-day. A panikhida may be held for one or many deceased Christians. During the panikhida service the priest and those attending hold lighted candles.

The panikhida in its structure is the Matins for the dead with litiyá. Its order is set out in the Euchologion in some editions of the Prayer book.

Litiyá, from the Greek word meaning "fervent prayer", is said before the body is carried out of the house; when the body is met in the narthex of the church, and after the return of the relatives from the burial and, if the priest grants the request of the believers, after Vespers, Matins, and at the end of the Liturgy after the Prayer before the Ambo.

In memory of the dead it is the custom to prepare a dish of cooked wheat grains mixed with honey called *kolyva* or *kutiya*, and place it upon a special table before which the panikhida and litiyá are held. The grain contains hidden life—in order to give fruit it must be buried and decay in the earth. The body of the dead is buried in the earth in order to decay and when the time comes to rise incorruptible for future life (1 Cor. 15.36-38). The honey symbolizes the spiritual sweetness of the blessing of Eternal Life. In this way the *kutiya* is the visible expression of the belief of the living in the immortality of the deceased; in the resurrection of their bodies, and in the bliss of Eternal Life through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Candles are lighted during the litiyá. One is placed in the dish with the *kutiya* and others are held by the priest and those present.

The Funeral Service is performed only once for the deceased.

The essence of the Funeral Service is to pray for the deceased, literally, instead of him, when the living temporarily give the dead their mouths, hands, their life's energy.

There are several orders of Funeral Service in the Church, according to the age and status of the deceased: the funeral of laymen, monks and nuns, priests, hierarchs and infants. But for whomsoever the funeral service is held, the chief aim is to see the deceased off prayerfully and solemnly on his last journey, as well as to intercede for him praying for the remission of his sins and repose of his soul in the mansions of the saints. In other words, the rites of funeral aim at granting the souls of the deceased spiritual benefit. With this benefit the prayers of Absolution conform.

Furthermore, the funeral service helps to alleviate the grief over their loss of relatives and near ones of the deceased; turns their sorrow by the coffin into spiritual joy; tears and lamentation into a sacred hymns, holy word and gesture. "Making of our funeral dirge the song: Alleluia". These words repeated many times show that the funeral service is as necessary for the living as for the dead. "The Funeral Service imparts to individual grief a universal form; a form of pure humanity, rising to ideal humanity, made in the likeness of Christ, and thereby transfers our sorrow to the Son of Man, and we, individually, are relieved, freed and healed. He is the Liberator" (Father Pavel Florensky. *Theological Heritage*. In the periodical *Theological Studies*, Moscow, No. 17, 1977, p. 234). That is precisely why in the Service for the dead the victorious hymn "Alleluia" is sung so often, although the service is connected with a sorrowful event for the relatives and dear ones of the deceased.

Q. What is a moleben and what are its forms?

A. Moleben singing is part of any divine service. But according to tradition moleben singing, or simply moleben, means a special divine service at which the Church prayerfully invokes the Lord, the Mother of God, or the holy Saints, for mercy, Divine Grace or a blessing. Usually a moleben is timed for some occasion in Church life (the feast day of the patronal saint of a church or of any other saint). It is also held in times of joy or trouble in the life of the country, different regions or church community—victory over the enemy, invasions or calamities such as drought, heavy rainfall, bad harvest, epidemics. Molebens are said at the request of believers in connection with diverse circumstances in life, with the health of some member of the church community; at the beginning of an undertaking or journey...

For a believer the smallest detail of life, its particular aspects, call for special blessing so that the whole life might be full of grace. That is why any new undertaking requires prayer, special sanctification, and the paying of the tithe to God. The aspiration to spiritualize human activities, to

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# BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

## MOSCOW DIOCESAN GAZETTE Moscow, Publication of the Moscow Diocese, Nos. 1-2, 1990; No. 1, 1991

In 1990 a new church magazine came out—the Moscow Diocesan Gazette. In the foreword to the first issue its editor-in-chief, Metropolitan Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna, introduces it to the readers as a publication whose primary aim is to help the parishes of the Moscow Diocese.

The magazine publishes articles on doctrine, history, and morality, and gives information about the life of the Moscow Diocese. Up to date three issues have been printed.

Issue No. 1, which opens with the Easter Message of Metropolitan Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna to the clergy and flock of the Moscow Diocese, acquaints the reader with the Act of the Holy Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church (October 9, 1989) on the canonization of St. Iov and St. Tikhon, the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, whose lives, as well as the troparia and kontakia to each, have been published in Nos. 1 and 2, 1990.

Since the magazine is intended for a wide circle of readers, among whom are people who are taking their first steps in Orthodoxy,

the editors considered it their duty to publish in it parts of the Prayerbook as well as the Catechism of Bishop Aleksandr (Semenov-Tyan-Shansky)

To help the newly-established parishes, the first issue carries Section VIII of the statute of the Russian Orthodox Church, adopted by the Local Council of June 1988. The section adduced tells in detail the principles governing the establishment of a parish commune, registration by secular authorities, the possibility of leasing, building or acquiring premises for the needs of the parish; the administrative structure of the parish; the particular activities of such bodies as parish meetings, parish councils, and auditing commissions.

The second issue of the Moscow Diocesan Gazette opens with the sad news of the passing away of His Holiness Patriarch Pimen of Moscow and All Russia. Then follows information about the deliberations of the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church which elected Metropolitan Aleksy of Leningrad and Novgorod, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia.

The section devoted to Church Life dwells on district meetings in deaneries which considered legislative issues and relations between Church communities and State bodies; the questions of aid to newly-opened churches, the involvement of the clergy in social activities, Sunday schools for children and adults, mercy and charity.

The second issue starts on the publication of the Gospel According to St. Luke with detailed commentaries by Hieromonk Ignaty Krekshin, based on the study of historical and theological literature. The editors plan to publish further material for those desiring to deepen their exegetical knowledge.

"Letters to various people on diverse subjects of faith and life" by Bishop Feofan Govorov are of interest to all regardless of the degrees of their closeness to Faith. The bishop considers questions with which people are preoccupied throughout their life.

In the second issue of the magazine the reader is told of the difference between a child's blind faith and the conscious faith. How profound is the concept

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accomplish them with God's help and with His blessing, lies at the base of many forms of moleben.

The Church sanctifies and blesses at moleben services the elements—water, air, fire and earth; houses or other dwelling of Orthodox Christians—a building, monastery, ship, a city being built; food and the necessary objects in life and household activities—seeds, fruits of plants and trees, domestic animals, wells, fishing nets, etc... Molebens are said at the beginning and conclusion of a man's activity—study, travel, sowing, harvesting, building houses,

army service, and for a person's spiritual and physical health, or for the cure of a sick person.

Molebens according to prayers included in them have definite similarities and differences. The similarity lies in the fact that in structure they resemble Matins. The differences lie not only in the content and number of prayers, but are connected with the fact that some are held with the singing of a canon or without, others without the reading of the Gospel.

Every believer coming to church may ask the priest to say a moleben for any one of his spiritual needs.



of the eternity of infernal torment is the theme of the second part of Bishop Feofan's notes which is given in the third issue.

In the article "Prayer for the Dead and Obedience of the Holy Church", Bishop Afanasy Sakharov, with due respect for the canons of forefathers and love for the flock, reminds us of the need to regulate services, which must be conducted "with special care and circumspection".

The third issue (No. 1, 1991) of the Moscow Diocesan Gazette, opens with the Christmas Message of Metropolitan Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna to the clergy and flock of the Moscow Diocese.

"The appeal of the Bishops' Council on the Attitude to the Activities of the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia" dated October 25-27, 1990, is a document in which all Orthodox believers in our country and in the diaspora are urged to seek peace and love among those confessing Orthodoxy and not to follow the path of schism.

In the first issue of the Moscow Diocesan Gazette, Metropolitan Yuvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna recommends the superintendent deans, the clergy and church

councils of the Moscow Diocese not to permit persons without ecclesiastical documents confirming their personality and canonic rights to perform religious rites.

Devoted to the same question is the article by Aleksei Uminsky "Beware of Heresy" which analyses the ways of penetration of heretic teachings into the midst of laity and clergy, their personality and legal capacity.

The diocesan meeting held on November 22, 1990, in Moscow is dealt with in the article by its secretary, Father Aleksandr Ganaba. A comprehensive analysis of parish life in the diocese was given at the meeting.

In line with the enlightening tasks of the Russian Orthodox Church today, the third issue carries an article describing the life of St. Ksenia of St. Petersburg. Apart from historical facts it offers episodes recounted by people who had been healed through prayers said to the Saint.

The article "The Canonization of Saints (Problems and Solutions)" tells of the necessity of reverting to hagiographic heritage in our age when many human values have been lost. In all ages the Church paid great attention to the study of the

Lives of Saints in order to nurture Christian morality. Today when the revival of spiritual life is evident it is especially important to publish articles on the experiences of the startsy. A commission on the canonization of saints has been formed which prepares materials necessary for the glorification of ascetics venerated by the people and considers questions connected with the canonization of saints.

An article on the Sacrament of Holy Baptism (based on the Works of St. Feofan the Recluse) was written by Archimandrite Georgy Tertyshnikov. In it he speaks of the salvific role of the Sacrament, which makes man worthy to receive the gifts of grace; the necessity of thorough preparation of the candidate for Baptism by the priests according to the examples set by the Apostles, of the beneficent spiritual changes.

The magazine publishes regularly statistical information regarding the general number of parishes in the Moscow Diocese and the number of newly-consecrated churches.

V. NIKITIN

#### "KITEZH-GRAD".

The publication of the Supreme  
Old Believers' Council and of the Theological Commission in Lithuania.  
Nos. 1-2, Vilnius, 1990

The Supreme Old Believers' Council in Lithuania and its Theological Commission last year began the regular publication of the illustrated quarterly journal Kitezh-grad.

Kitezh-grad was produced by the Kaunas Old Believers' Theological Seminary under the general control of spiritual mentor I. Nikitin, now Kitezh-grad's Editor-in-Chief.

Noting the current dire state of religious education in many Old Believers' communities, the publishers express their intention somehow to facilitate the development of religious and moral education in a spirit of devotion to the Holy Fathers' teaching and to Old Orthodox traditions and thus aid the growth and consolidation of the Old Believers' Church. "Readers of the

journal will find a variety of theological and educational articles, as well as articles dedicated to the history of the Old Believers and to contemporary Church life both in the USSR and abroad", it states in the address to the reader published in the first issue of the journal.

The journal opens with "The Tale of Kitezh-grad" in which spiritual mentor V. Vasiliev refers to the famous story of the poetic symbol of Holy Russ, the legend of the town of Kitezh, which in the face of attacks by enemy hordes hid itself at the bottom of the forbidden Lake Svetloyar, lost in the dense Volga forests.

A biographical article about the Chairman of the Supreme Old Believers' Council in Lithuania, I. Egorov, and his essay, "The Old Be-

lievers' Pomorye Church in Lithuania", which traces the history of the Old Believers from the schism in the 17th century until the establishment of the first Old Believers' communities in Lithuania, can be found in the "Official Columns".

In the "Church History" section the first chapters of the Book of Genesis are printed, from the creation of heaven and earth until the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise. V. Vasiliev's theological study "On the Life-giving Cross of Christ" makes up the section entitled "Our Shrines", and A. Zhilko's article "On the Feast of Easter" comprises the "Church Feasts" section.

The order of service for Sundays and feast days (January till March) can be found in the "Liturgical Practice" section. This is of great



assistance to the spiritual mentors and singers in Old Believers' communities.

The article by I. Egorov is dedicated to the 160th anniversary of the church of the Vilnius Old Believers' community.

One of the youngest of more than fifty Old Believers' communities in Lithuania, Vilnius community, nowadays has about 7,000 parishioners and is the spiritual centre of Old Orthodoxy in that republic. In 1990, thanks to the labours of spiritual mentor, A. Boyarov, a Sunday school has been established in the community to teach the children the basics of Christian faith, Church Rule, singing and reading.

In the article by V. Vasiliev entitled "The Construction of Churches—Our Holy Duty", the solemn moleben to mark the occasion of the laying of the foundation stone of the Old Believers' church in the Lithuanian town of Utena in October 1989 is described. The section is concluded with a poem by K. Boblov, "Counsel".

In the "Church News" section reports are given on the contemporary life and activity of the Pomorye Church in Lithuania, including an account of the very meeting at which the possibility of the Supreme Old Believers' Council in Lithuania publishing a journal was thoroughly discussed, as was the choice of name, editor and editorial board.

The second (Easter) issue of *Kitezh-grad* begins with a greeting to mark that great Christian feast, the Glorious Resurrection of Christ. Further is a short biographical article to mark the 85th birthday of the prominent figure among Old Believers, the Chairman of the

Theological Commission of the Supreme Old Believers' Council in Lithuania, the spiritual mentor of the Kaunas Old Believers' community, I. Nikitin. This is followed by an article by I. Nikitin, "Old Believers' Church and Councils" in which the author devotes particular attention to the vital principle of "sobornost" in the life of the Church.

The second half of I. Egorov's article "The Old Believers' Pomorye Church in Lithuania" is published in this issue. The essay focuses on state policy towards Old Believers in various decades of the 19th century and also on the cultural heritage of the Old Believers: the polemical essays of Old Believer writers; icon-painting; and ancient znamenny chant. The article also draws attention to the appraisal of their Church by many Old Believers' Church and secular researchers, historians, writers, musicians, archivists and bibliophiles.

Further on in the second issue the text of the Book of Genesis is continued, and there are articles "On the Life-giving Cross of Christ" and "On the Feast of Easter".

Spiritual mentor G. Legenzov tells of the Old Believers' community in Klaipeda. Founded in 1941 by a small number of Old Believer families who had emigrated from Poland, the Klaipeda community now boasts several thousand parishioners and is one of the strongest in the country. With mentor Legenzov's active participation, the construction of a spacious new church has begun and the reconstruction of the old one has been carried out. A Sunday school for children has opened and the high standard of church services and singing has been maintained.

V. Degtyarev's article "From the History of the Novosibirsk Old Believers' Community" recounts with great warmth the author's meeting with the community's spiritual mentor, R. Oparin who has worthily continued the work of his ancestors who were also spiritual mentors of the community. G. Derzhavin's famous ode "God" brings this section to a close.

In the "Church News" section the anniversary article of I. Egorov deals with the outstanding icon-painter, I. Mikhailov. His icons are found in many Old Believer parish churches in Lithuania, Latvia and Byelorussia, as well as in the homes of many parishioners. The article is prefaced by a colour photograph showing Ivan Ipatievich in his studio working on an icon.

Reminiscences of spiritual mentor O. Rozanov are dedicated to the memory of the famous champion of Old Orthodoxy, spiritual mentor A. Murnikov. Further on, material compiled by the spiritual director of the old Pomorye community of Kazan, A. Khrychev, about V. Skripov, the senior minister of the Chapel of the Kazan Icon and one of the most celebrated Old Believer ministers of the Volga region, is published, as are the obituaries of spiritual mentors M. Biryulin and F. Makarov.

This issue of the journal ends with the section "Matushka's advice", which offers recipes for Easter kulich and paskha. The cover of this number is decorated with a kulich and burning candle and painted eggs.

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S. MATSNEY





Installing the Cross on the Cupola of the Cathedral Church  
of the St. John the Divine Monastery in Ryazan Diocese





PUBLICATION  
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